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THE PRINCESS AND THE HORRID DRAGON.
("Companions of the Forest.")

THE ITALIAN FAIRY
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BOOK BY ANNE MAC-
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DONELL WITH ILLUS-
TRATIONS BY MORRIS
MEREDITH WILLIAMS
T. FISHER UNWIN LTD.
LONDON: ADELPHI TERRACE

First Published
1911
Second Impression
1916
Third Impression
1920
Fourth Impression
1925
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TO THE CHILDREN

DEAR AMY FRANCES (and the others),

Italian girls and boys have, I think, fewer fairy books than you; but their mothers and nurses make up for that by being excellent story-tellers. The tales told to the children are not very unlike the favourites of English nurseries, and those you read in Perrault and in Grimm. There is a little difference of accent, that's all.

But in Italy fairy-tales are loved not only by the children. A great number of grown-up people like them, too. Of course I do not mean that all the solemn judges and Members of Parliament and schoolmasters, and the fine-dressed ladies and gentlemen, tell each other such stories when they meet together-though in old times just these very people found in them one of their chief amusements. And the writings of some of the greatest Italian poets, Ariosto, for instance, are full of fairy-lore. But even nowadays you may count as lovers of fairy-tales, besides the children, nearly all the country folks.

Round the focolare, the Italian peasant fireside, they still sit in the winter evenings after their work is done-men (some of them, at least), women and children, and tell and listen, and listen and tell, for hours together. The tales are handed down from one generation to another. The best story-tellers are women-perhaps because they do not read so many newspapers.

As to the personages of the stories, the giants and wizards and witches can hold their own with those of any land. I have never met in Italy the little people in green who sometimes surprise the wanderer on Scottish hillsides, and who dance in shady glens of the North, nor the red-capped leprechaun of Ireland. Every country has

its own fairies, of course. But there is one thing you should know about Italian fairies. It is most important! They have a habit of taking on quite ordinary shapes. Indeed, they prefer it. Perhaps you think you see an old market-woman, or a milkmaid, and you pass by without a single glance of wonder. They may really be fairies all the same. This makes travelling in Italy very interesting. You never know when you may meet a fairy. And so let us all be on our best behaviour there, for fairies everywhere, but especially in Italy, are very particular about politeness from ordinary mortals like ourselves. If all the tales be true, it is no joke to incur their displeasure, while, on the other hand, there is no end to their gratitude for good services. The goatherd in this book, who put a green shade over the heads of the three ladies sleeping in the hot sun, never thought of their being fairies. Nor did Gigi guess, when he carried the poor old woman's pitcher up the hill, that she could possibly reward him with a magic ring. Sometimes they even reward you when you do them a good turn without meaning it. At least, so little Ranella found. But that belongs to a story I found no room for in these pages. Ranella was a tiny mite, something like Little Fingerling. One day she rode to town to see the Prince in a carriage made of a pumpkin, drawn by her mother's best white hen. It was all she could afford, and she was rather proud of her turn-out. Now, that very day three fairy sisters had dined with a wicked old witch. They were given fish to eat, with endless bones in it, and one of the bones stuck in the throat of the youngest sister and nearly choked

her. "Laugh it out!" cried the horrid old witch. But how could she laugh when she was in pain and danger? Leaving the witch's house they sat down by the roadside. All kinds of painful remedies were applied to the sufferer, such as beating her on the back, and so on, but in vain. "If our poor sister could only laugh!" said her two elders. But what in the world was there to laugh about? They tried to think of all the funny things they had ever heard, but

none of them laughed. For you see there are fairies of different degrees of power, and these were not like the great Aurelia in "Lionbruno," and could not always help themselves. Then who should come along but Ranella in her pumpkin coach, drawn by her mother's best white hen, and looking grand and solemn as a queen! The sisters burst out laughing, and the youngest laughed so loud, so long, and so heartily, that the bone was loosed, and her life was saved. Ranella was a little offended at their laughter, but they soon put that all right, when they turned her into a tall and graceful lady, and her pumpkin-coach and hen into an equipage fit for a queen. She had made them laugh just at the right moment, and so she had a splendid reward.

Again and again in Italian fairy-tales you find laughter and gaiety and merry wit rewarded. The Princess is ill. She is pale and sad. She mopes. She is like to die. The King and Queen are in great distress. Doctors come and shake their heads over her, and say, "Unless she laughs she will die!" But nobody about the Court is of any use. She hears the Prime Minister and the Chaplain and the Jester make their best jokes, and she never once smiles. A herald then proclaims throughout the land that whoever can make the Princess laugh-be he noble or peasant-shall marry her. And always there turns up at the palace a stranger of merry wit, and before he has been in her presence a minute or two, she is laughing heartily. Her life is saved. That is a very favourite story, and it is quite true.

Therefore wise travellers in Italy-that is, those who have got the old fairy-tales by heart-never pull long faces, nor give themselves airs when they meet the people of the country. For they never know when they may meet a fairy. The chambermaid may be one, or the coachman, or the old woman sitting by the church door. You never can tell. And these wise travellers, good-humoured and gay, have their reward. For fairies have not lost their power.

ANNE MACDONELL.

COMPANIONS OF THE FOREST

I

A LONG time ago there lived in Calabria, in the south of Italy, a poor boy called Caesarino di Berni. A promising lad he was, clever, handsome, good-humoured, and a kind and helpful son to his widowed mother. He had no boy-companions of his own age, but he did not miss them, and I will tell you why.

One day he had wandered far into a neighbouring

forest, and there in the thickest part he came upon a huge cavern. On examining it he found it was divided into three caves. In one of these he found a litter of bear-cubs; in another a litter of wolf-cubs; in the third were little lions cuddled together. Their mothers had left them when they were just of an age to begin to fend for themselves; but they were still the prettiest, play-fullest things you can imagine. Caesarino took one of each home with him, fed them, and in time they became his favourite pets. In their turn they grew very fond of him and of each other; nor were they ever anything but gentle with the other folk about the house. When they grew bigger, Caesarino trained them to hunt. Early in the morning, before anyone was about, he would be

up and off with them to the forest, where they spent long happy days together.
If he taught them hunting, according to a method of his own, they taught him all kinds of forest-lore, of which wild animals know more than men. When night came on and he brought them back, he was laden with spoil. By this means, as the years went on, he grew

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rich, and was able to support his mother and sisters in great comfort. Of course, the few neighbours they had wondered very much about the source of their prosperity; but as they were not hunters, and never went into the forest, they did not find out for themselves. Now Caesarino, though helpful to his neighbours, warned his family not to tell how he spent his days, lest some jealous

person should harm his faithful helpers, or steal them away.
But his sisters forgot their promise, and chattered about their brother's hunting to the folks around; and one day a neighbour said to him, "You are a sulky kind of fellow, surely! Good friends as we are, you never take me with you when you go out. I hear you have become a mighty hunter. Now nothing would please me better than to spend a day in the forest with you." Caesarino answered neither yea nor nay; but to himself he said, "My secret is out. It is time I left this place, lest evil should befall my three good friends."
So, leaving all his possessions to his mother and sisters, he set out into the world to seek his fortune. Of course, the Wolf, the Bear and the Lion went with him; and the four were the best of company to each other on the road. At last they reached the sea-shore. There they went on board a ship, and landed in Sicily. After long travel over hill and dale, they came one day to a beautiful and very

lonely place where stood a hermitage. The sun was blazing hot over their heads; and they entered for rest and shelter. Shortly after the hermit came home. At the sight of the wild animals in his hut he started and called out for terror; but Caesarino said, "Fear nothing, good father. They will not harm you." No one looked on Caesarino without trusting him; so the hermit was satisfied, and, poor man though he was, he found bread and wine to give to his guest, who was hungry and tired.

The three beasts foraged for themselves, and all the five supped merrily together.
"A fine country this!" said Caesarino to the old man.
"You think so?" was his reply. "Ah, you do not know. Ours is indeed a most unhappy country! Near this place there hides a horrid, fearsome dragon. When he comes out of his lair his poisonous breath destroys all that come near him. You see how solitary it is. That is because all our people are leaving the land. Moreover, the monster demands that every day a human creature shall be offered him for his food. Were this refused, he would come out and devour the inhabitants far and near. Many poor folks have been thrown to him to stay his appetite; but he only gets greedier and greedier, and daintier and daintier; and now-what do you think?-he demands for his dinner to-morrow no one less than the beautiful young Princess Dorothea, the daughter of our King!"
" And no man goes forth to slay this horrid creature ?" asked Caesarino, with spirit.
"It is impossible! No man dares! The poor King is wild with grief, but for the sake of his people he must give her up."
" I think the maiden will not die just yet," said Caesarino, quietly.
Next morning he was up and away betimes with his three companions before the hermit was awake. The four betook themselves to the place ordained for the

sacrifice, where the King's daughter was already placed. Alone she stood in the middle of the road, her cowardly attendants having all fled. He looked on her beauty for a brief instant and his heart was filled with pity, but she seemed turned to stone with terror, and neither saw nor heard his approach. And, indeed, as he looked, on rushed the horrid monster towards her, his jaws open, his fiery eyes gleaming with savage delight at the thought of the delicate morsel awaiting him. Much too eager and ravenous was he to take any heed of the young man standing by. And if he had, what could a mere stripling

do?
But Caesarino, just at the right moment, spurred on his animals, and with splendid courage they rushed to the attack, gripping the creature from behind and avoiding his poisonous breath. The dragon struggled fiercely; but he was powerless in their grip; and after a desperate combat, which lasted for some minutes, he fell on the road quite dead.
Caesarino called to the fainting damsel to arise and have no fear, and bade her run to her attendants, who stood trembling at a distance, and go home at once with them to her father. Then with his wood-knife he cut out the dragon's tongue, put it in his wallet, and went away with his three friends as quietly as if he encountered a dragon every morning of his life. All he said to the hermit on entering the hut was:
You may now sleep in peace.
The country is safe. The dragon is no more."

But soon after Caesarino had left the place of the sacrifice, a certain man passed the spot, and spied the dead monster. A rude, clownish, ruffianly person he was!

Aha!" said he, "the King promised the Princess in marriage to whoever should slay the dragon. I'll have her!" So saying, he took out a cutlass he wore in his belt, and struck off the creature's head, put it in a sack, and raced off to the city and the King's palace with it as hard as ever he could. As he entered the gates the bells were ringing peals of joy; the people were in the streets singing, or cheering in front of the palace. The ruffian-Grechio was his name-made his way easily enough into the royal presence, for all doors were open at such a time; and falling on his knees before the King, he said, "It was I, sire, who killed the dragon! Now I claim the reward-your daughter as my wife!"
"You killed the dragon! You? But I must have some proof of it," said the King.
"See my proof," returned Grechio; and he took out the dragon's head and held it up before them all; and the assembled people in their joy cried, "Long live Grechio! Grechio shall wed her!"
Now as for Dorothea, she had been in too fainting a condition during the combat with the monster to know what her deliverer looked like. But her heart sank at the thought of so churlish a husband as the one standing before her. And the King said to himself, "Must I really have this boor for my son-in-law?" Nevertheless, a

King's word is sacred; and he ordered that great feasting should be held in his capital and throughout his kingdom. He himself was to give a splendid banquet in honour of the event.
Now the hermit, who used to come into the city every day to beg his bread, heard of all the feasting that had been ordered; and he was told the story of the great champion Grechio. "Did that goodly youth, my guest, then lie to me?" he said. So he went back to his hermitage and told Caesarino all that folks were saying in the town. Caesarino laughed and said, "Ah, he cut off the head, did he ? I can show something more convincing than that." And he took the tongue from his wallet and held it up. "See here! Is this not enough?
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Come with me at once to the King," said the hermit. So he and Caesarino and the Lion, the Bear, and the Wolf set off for the city and the King's palace. While the old man made his way into the presence-chamber, the others waited at the door. Kneeling before the King, the hermit said, "I have heard with great concern that your Majesty is about to give your fair daughter, Dorothea, in marriage to a rough clown, who will be no good King for your people when it shall please God to call you hence. But the fellow is not only a clown, he is a liar as well; and with your permission I will bring the real champion before you."
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My good man," said the King, " a promise is a promise. And whatever I may think of Prince Grechio "-they called him Prince by this time-" he has brought me
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clear proof that he it was rid my kingdom of that terrible scourge."
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Then," replied the hermit, "I beg, sire, that you will order the head of the monster to be brought here." And the horrid thing was brought, and held up in the sight of all.
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"Open its jaws," said the hermit. And they opened its jaws. "But where is its tongue ? They looked: there was no tongue!
Then at a signal Caesarino and his companions came forward. The bystanders looked with wonder and admiration at the fine young man, so tall and fair and noble of bearing-though they drew back at the sight of his hairy friends.

"I bring what is missing, your Majesty," said the youth; and from his wallet he drew forth the great tongue. Then opening the jaws, he put it into the horrid mouth; and, lo, it fitted exactly!

By this time Grechio, who had been standing near, trembling the while, saw that his falsehood was discovered; and now he made a sudden movement towards the door. But the King cried, "Seize him, guards! Do not let him go!" And they seized him, and flung him into prison, where he was given time for repentance.

After the guards had borne away the false pretender, the King ordered Caesarino to tell them how it came about that he, a stranger, was the champion of the Princess and the deliverer of their land. He told his story modestly, adding, But for all this I should have no praise. It was not I killed the dragon, but my three faithful friends here." And he dragged forward the three beasts and showed them to the King, who caressed them with smiles and tears of gratitude.

So Caesarino, not Grechio, was the bridegroom at

the wedding next week, and if the King rejoiced over so goodly a son-in-law, Dorothea rejoiced a great deal more.

II

BUT the wedding did not end the story. Caesarino was now a prince, and he and his beasts had the great rich royal forest to hunt in, whenever he could spare any time from the company of his fair bride. Meanwhile the news of his greatness spread to his old home, and his sisters grew restless. They would not even wait till he sent for them, as he intended to do, but took ship and arrived without warning at the court, where, for his sake, they were well received. Yet they were never satisfied, however kindly they were treated, but continually grumbled, and were envious of all the other ladies about the Princess. Worse than that, some wicked men, jealous of the favour shown by the King to their brother, instigated them to put an end to Caesarino's life, and showed them a sure way.

It was his habit, when he came back tired from the chase, to throw off his doublet, and cast himself down on a couch in his wife's room, while she played and sang to him. These wicked people, knowing this, dipped a sharp bone in a deadly poisonous liquid, and concealed it in the couch, so that when he lay down it pierced his silken shirt and wounded him. After a few brief moments of agony he tried to sit up, gave one groan, and fell back lifeless. His young wife gave the alarm. The household

ran to him; physicians were called in; they applied restoratives, but all was in vain; and the palace was filled with cries of mourning for the well-beloved Prince. The Princess and King, too, were overwhelmed with grief.
But what of his good beasts the while? They had come in from the chase with him, and had lain down in the fine lairs he had made for them. Tired with waiting for him to come and feed them, as it was his wont to do every day with his own hands, they all three fell asleep. The wailing and lamentation should have wakened them and told them that something was wrong; but the wicked sisters and their accomplices had stuffed and sealed the ears of the beasts while they slept, so that they might hear nothing.
66
But the Wolf's ears were too restless, even in sleep, to be sealed up quite; and he it was first heard something of the commotion in the palace. He crept out of his lair softly, wandered about, peered, listened as well as he could, and came back. Brothers," he whispered, "I fear some evil thing has befallen our dear master." But they could hear nothing, he saw, though they were now awake. So he made signs, and at last they understood- for animals have many marvellous ways of speaking to each other that their dear master was in trouble, or dead. Then the Bear with his sharp claws scooped out the stuffing from the Lion's ears, and the Lion did the same for the Wolf and the Bear.
But all this took much time, and when at last they
II

got outside the palace, they saw a long funeral procession, and heard the wails of mourners. Neither the King nor Princess Dorothea was there, both being prostrate with grief in their apartments in the palace. The beasts followed soberly and sadly till they came to the cemetery; but there the people became aware of their presence, and as no one knew if they were to be trusted without their master, the crowd took fright and fled, priests, acolytes, mourners and all, leaving the body of Caesarino on the bier. Alone with the body, the Lion, the Bear and the Wolf snuffed all about it and over it, examined it, and at last found a stiff and blackened wound.
Said the Lion to the Bear, "We want your special medicine here." The Bear opened his mouth; the Lion put his paw down his throat, and brought up a quantity of bear's-grease. They spread it over the wound, and when the wound was softer, Dr. Lion sucked the poison all out. Meanwhile the Wolf had gone into a wood near the cemetery and brought back a powerful herb of heal-ing, which in another moment gave back life to Caesarino. He stirred, opened his eyes, sat up, looked about him, saw his three good friends and smiled. Those of the

funeral procession who had not run away very far, now came back and saw the wonder. The news spread. They ran with it to the town. It reached the King in his chamber, who went to fetch his sorrowing daughter, and brought her out to meet her restored husband. She threw herself into his arms in an ecstasy of joy.
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THE ITALIAN FAIRY BOOK
Oh, but it was the wicked sisters who were frightened then! The King would have put them to death when the whole tale came out, but Dorothea said: "Do not spoil our happiness by an act of vengeance. Only send them back to where they came from, as they are not to be trusted." So the sisters were sent out of the country, and returned home as poor as they had come.
As for the Lion, the Bear, and the Wolf, neither the King nor the Princess, nor the lords and ladies of the Court could make enough of them. And when Caesarino at last reigned in the old King's stead, they were still his happy and trusty companions, just as they had been when as a poor lad he had hunted with them for his living in his native forests, and when he had set out in their company to seek his fortune.
"And thus, and thus the story ran.
Tell me a better if you can."
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FORTUNE AND THE BOOBY
ONCE there was a man who was as rich as the sea, but as ill-luck would have it, he had a son so idle and so stupid that he could not tell a bean-pod from a cucumber. Unable to put up any longer with his folly, he gave him a good handful of crowns and sent him to trade in the Levant; for he well knew that seeing various countries and mixing with divers people awaken the mind and sharpen the wits.
Moscione*- for that was the name of the son-mounted his horse and rode away towards Venice, meaning to embark on board some vessel bound for Cairo. When he had travelled a good day's journey, he came upon a young man standing by a poplar tree, to whom he said,
66
What is your name, my lad? where do you come from? and what is your trade?"
The lad replied, "My name is Lightning; I am from Arrowland; and I can run like the wind."
"I should like to see a proof of it," said Moscione; and Lightning answered, "Wait a moment and you shall."
Suddenly a doe came bounding over the plain, and Lightning, letting her pass on some way to give her the more law, darted after her so rapidly and with so light a
* Pronounce Moshy-ōné.
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foot that, had the ground been strewn with flour, he would not have left the mark of his shoe. In four bounds he came up with her. Moscione, amazed at this exploit, asked if he would come and live with him, and promised to pay him royally.

Lightning consented, and they went on their way together; but they had not journeyed many miles when they met another youth, to whom Moscione said, "What is your name, comrade? what country are you from? and what is your trade ?

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"My name," replied the lad, "is Hare's-Ear; I am from Vale-Curious; and when I put my ear to the ground I hear all that is passing in the world without stirring from the spot."

"If that be true," said Moscione, "tell me what they are now saying at my home."

The lad put his ear to the ground and replied, "An old man is talking to his wife, and saying, 'Thank goodness! that fool of a son of mine, Moscione, is out of my sight. Good riddance! Perhaps he'll learn in his travels to be a man instead of a good-for-nothing idiot!'"

"Stop! Stop!" said Moscione. "I believe you. No need to say more! So come along with me, for you have found the road to fortune."

"Well and good!" said the youth. So they all went on together and travelled ten miles farther, when they met another man, to whom Moscione said, "What is your name, my brave fellow? where were you born, and what

can you do in the world?" And the man answered,

66

My name is Shootstraight; I am from Castle Aimwell ; and I can shoot with a crossbow so point-blank as to hit an apple in the middle."

" I should like to see a proof of it," said Moscione. So the lad charged his crossbow, took aim, and made a pea leap from the top of a stone; whereupon Moscione took him also into his company.

And they travelled on another day's journey, till they came to some people who were building a large pier in the scorching heat of the sun. So Moscione had compassion on them, and said, "My masters, how is it you can stand the heat of this furnace, which is fit to roast a buffalo ?"

And one of them answered, "Oh, we are as cool as a rose ; for we have a young man here who blows upon us from behind in such a manner that it seems just as if the west wind were blowing." "Let me see him, I pray," cried Moscione. So the mason called the lad, and Moscione said to him, "Tell me, by the life of your father, what is your

name? what country are you from? and what is your profession?" And the lad replied, "My name is Blow-blast; I am from Windy-Land; and I can make all the winds with my mouth. If you wish for a zephyr, I will breathe one that will delight your soul. If you wish for a squall, I will throw down houses."

Seeing is believing," said Moscione. Whereupon Blow-blast breathed at first quite gently, so that it seemed to be a soft evening breeze. Then, changing suddenly, he

sent forth such a furious blast that it uprooted a row of oaks.
When Moscione saw this he took Blowblast also as a companion; and travelling on, he met another lad, to whom he said, "What is your name, if I may make so bold? whence are you, if one may ask? and what is your trade, if it is a fair question ?"
The youth answered, "My name is Strongback; I am from Valentino; and I have such strength that I can take a mountain on my back, and it seems to me only a feather."
"That sounds very fine," said Moscione. "But give me a proof."
Then Strongback began to load himself with masses of rock, trunks of trees, and so many other weights, that a thousand large waggons could not have carried them, which when Moscione saw, he begged the lad to join him.
So they travelled on, till they came to Fair-Flower, the King of which place had a daughter who ran like the wind, and could pass over the waving corn without bending an ear. And the King had issued a proclamation that whoever could overtake her in running should have her to wife, but whoever was left behind should lose his head.
When Moscione arrived in this country, and heard the proclamation, he went straight to the King, and offered to run with his daughter. But in the morning he sent to inform him that he was taken ill, and

being unable to run himself, he would send another young man in his place. "Come who will!" said Channetella-for that was the name of the King's daughter. " I care not a fig-it is all one to me."
So when the great square was filled with people come to see the race, insomuch that the men swarmed like ants, and the windows and balconies were all as full as eggs, Lightning came out and took his station at the top of the square, waiting for the signal. And lo! forth came Channetella, dressed in a short gown to the knee,

and neat and pretty little single-soled shoes. Then they placed themselves shoulder to shoulder; and as soon as the tarantara and too-too of the trumpets were heard, off they darted, running at such a rate that their heels touched their shoulders, so that they seemed like hares with the greyhounds after them. But Lightning left the Princess more than a hand's-breath behind him, and came first to the goal. Then you should have heard the huzzaing and shouting, the cries and the uproar, the whistling and clapping of hands, and all the people bawling out, "Hurra! Long life to the stranger!" Channe-
tella's face turned very red, and she stood lost in shame and confusion at seeing herself vanquished. But as there were to be two heats to the race, she fell to planning how to be revenged for this affront; and going home she put a charm into a ring. Now this charm was so powerful that if anyone had the ring upon his finger his legs would totter so that he would not be able to walk, much less

Meredith Williams
But Lightning left the princess more
Than a hands breasth Behind him

to run. Then she sent it as a present to Lightning, begging him to wear it on his finger for her sake.
Hare's-Ear heard the father and daughter plotting this trick, but said nothing, waiting to see the upshot of the affair. And when the sun rose they returned to the field, and at the usual signal the racing began once more. Again Channetella was like another Atalanta, but Lightning was like a foundered horse: not a step could he stir. Shootstraight, however, who saw his comrade's danger, and heard from Hare's-Ear how matters stood, laid hold on his crossbow and shot a bolt so exactly that it hit Lightning's finger. Out flew the stone from the ring in which the virtue of the charm lay; his legs that had been tied were set free, and with four goat-leaps he passed Channetella and won the race.
Now, according to the bargain, Moscione was to have the prize as the employer of the wonderful runner. But the King, displeased at the victory of a fool, bethought himself seriously whether or no he should give him his daughter. He took counsel with the wise men of his court, who replied that Channetella was too fine a mouth-
ful for such a miserable, idle dog; and that without breaking his royal word he might offer Moscione a gift of crowns instead, which would be more to the taste of a poor beggar than all the princesses in the world. This advice pleased the King, and he asked Moscione how much money he would take instead of the wife that had been promised him. Then Moscione, after consulting with the

others, answered, "I will take as much gold and silver as one of my comrades can carry on his back." The King consented; whereupon they brought Strongback, on whom they began to load bales of ducats, sacks of crowns, barrels of copper money, chests full of chains and rings; but the more they loaded him the firmer he stood, just like a tower, so that the treasury, the banks and the money-dealers of the city did not suffice, and the King sent to all the great people in every direction to borrow their silver candlesticks, basins, jugs, plates, trays and baskets ; and yet all was not enough to make up the full load. At length they went away, not fully laden, but tired and satisfied.

When the councillors saw what heaps and stores these four miserable dogs were carrying off, they said to the King that it was a great piece of folly to give away all the riches of his kingdom, and that it would be well to send people after them to lessen the precious load. The King gave ear to this advice, and immediately despatched a party of armed men, foot and horse, to overtake Moscione and his friends. But Hare's-Ear, who had heard this counsel, informed his comrades; and while the dust was rising to the sky from the trampling of those who were coming to unlade the rich cargo, Blowblast, seeing that things were come to a bad pass, began to blow at such a rate that he not only made their enemies fall flat on the ground, but he sent them flying more than a mile.

So without meeting any more hindrance, Moscione

arrived at his father's house, where he shared the booty with his companions, since, as the saying goes, a good deed deserves a good meed. He sent them away content and happy; but he stayed on with his father, rich beyond measure, and folks seeing him there like an ass laden with gold, used to say, "Heaven sends biscuits to him who has no teeth."

From Tuscany

WHAT THE STARS FORETOLD

ONE night a party of hunters were returning from the forest to the Court of Naples. Now, one of them was so proud that he would not ride with the others but galloped on in front by himself, and as he was a stranger he lost his way. He saw a peasant standing in the middle of the road and asked him to direct him. The peasant immediately led the way through a wood, and pointed in the direction of Naples. The hunter, who from his dress seemed to be some high personage, thanked him, and

before taking leave of his guide, said, "Now, my man, what were you doing when I met you?"
"I was reading the stars. To-night a child shall be born to my wife, and I would know its fortune in life."
"And what did the stars tell you?" asked the hunter, laughing.

The child will be a son, and he shall be King of Spain."
"What? King of Spain? No less than that?"
The huntsman seemed to think the answer a good joke, but really he did not like it at all. For he was the King of Spain, then on a visit to his brother of Naples. What if the stars spoke true ?
Now, he was a very crafty man; so he said to the

peasant, "Then you must give your son to me. If he is to be King one day, you are not fit to bring him up. I will take him to my home-I am a rich man, and noble-and there he will be trained as a young Prince."
It was a dazzling offer, but the father said to himself, "My wife would never give her child to a stranger, and neither would I. However, she shall answer." The huntsman, for he did not reveal who he was, walked back with the peasant to his cottage, and when they arrived there they learned that a son had been born. The offer was repeated to the mother, but she refused it with indignation. Weeks and months passed, and still the stranger came from time to time, coaxing and commanding the parents to give up the child. But the mother would not let the baby out of her sight. Now, he had been born with a strange birth-mark, a little royal crown on his right arm, and neither father nor mother would have the stranger told of this, lest he should long more and more for their child. They little guessed his evil intentions. One day the King of Spain hired a wicked man to go and steal the child while the mother's back was turned. After loitering about the cottage for a while in the dusk the ruffian was able to do so. Then he mounted a horse and rode away fast and far with the baby till he came to a thick wood. His orders were to kill it and bury it there; but when the little one smiled up in his face pity took hold of the ruffian's heart, and he said: "I am a wicked man, but I could not kill a little thing like that." So he left it

there, and brought back to the King a blood-stained garment; but the blood was that of a kid.
"I buried the creature in the wood," he said to his cruel master. "If you doubt me, send and find the

body." And, indeed, he had covered the sleeping child with leaves before he left him.

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Then the King of Spain went back to his own country, saying, "Well, that's settled. No base-born peasant shall sit upon my throne."
The abandoned child meanwhile had slept and waked, and cried and slept again. When the morning light woke him once more he threw off the leaves, played with them
25

and laughed aloud. At that very moment a gentleman rode by on a fine horse.
What is this? What is this?"
he cried. Then he got down, picked up the child and rode off with him in his arms.
"Here is a fine gift I bring you," he said to his wife when he reached his home, which was at a great distance over the mountains. "If no one claims him, we will bring him up as our son, God having given us no children of our own."
And no one claimed him. His poor parents could find no trace of their baby. Everywhere they asked if a young child, with the mark of a royal crown on its right arm, had been found; but the first news they heard of it was years after, when a wandering beggar told them a tale of how a dying friend of his had confessed to stealing a baby from their cottage, at the command of a rich stranger, and how he had left it alone in a forest. Bitterly did they regret that meeting with the stranger huntsman.
The child's new parents called him Dion, and he grew up under their care to be a clever, handsome and pleasant lad. He might have lived with them much longer, but one day a servant whispered in his ear that he was not Don Lodovico's son, but a foundling. Straightway he went to his foster-parents and asked them if it were the truth, and they confessed it was so, but said they loved him as if he were their own. Nevertheless, the news made him restless, and he was seized with a longing to go out into the world and seek his fortune, instead of
26

living idly on Don Lodovico's estates. "Peradventure also," he said, "I shall find my own father and mother, and let them know I did not die in the forest." He thanked his foster-parents for their care of him, asked their blessing, and set out into the world.

He wandered for many months and found neither fortune nor his parents. He crossed mountains and travelled in strange lands, picking up their speech by the way, till at last he came to the kingdom of Spain. Hunger was his companion on the road, and though he was a willing lad he found no work to do. Some said he was not old enough; others said he looked too fine a gentleman; others again treated him as a beggar. At last one evening he came to a garden gate. Peeping through the bars he saw the gardener watering flowers.

What do you want?" asked the gardener.

"I am hungry. If you'll give me supper I'll help you with your work to-morrow."

Well, I am in want of a lad just now," answered the gardener. So they struck a bargain. "If you work hard, you'll get on very well here, for this is the garden of the King of Spain."

So Dion became the gardener's boy, and lived well, and sang and whistled at his work all day long. Now, he was a quick and handsome lad, with good manners, and the King took notice of him while he walked in his garden. (It was the very same wicked old King who had tried to kill him when he was a child; but of this

Dion knew nothing.) One day he called him and said, "I want you to be my servant in the palace, to wait on me."

So Dion left the garden and the gardener's cottage, and went to wait on the King in his palace. The work was light; he had time on his hands, and he used it in improving himself in all the knightly exercises he had learnt at Don Lodovico's. Now and then he would be asked to attend the beautiful young Drusilla, the King's only daughter. He brought her flowers from the garden, sang to her, and they grew to love each other very much. The King paid no attention to this, thinking Dion, who had been a mere gardener's boy, would not dare aspire to his daughter's hand. It was only when some envious servants declared they had overheard the young man boasting that the Princess loved him, that the King grew alarmed and angry.

Drusilla was packed off at once to her uncle, the King of Naples, with orders that she was to be sent to school in a convent. And then her father devised a very cruel thing. Calling Dion to him, he said, "You would like to see your old playmate again, would you not? I have a letter to send to my brother of Naples. You shall be its bearer. Who knows what fate may await you there?

And the King smiled darkly.

Young Dion set out on his errand with a high heart,

never for a moment guessing that the letter he carried contained an order to the King of Naples to hang the bearer without delay! Now, as luck would have it,
28

THE ITALIAN FAIRY BOOK
when he reached the outskirts of Naples he was shown a short cut to the city through some woods; and who should be walking there but Drusilla and her governess? Oh, that was a meeting! They cried aloud for joy, and the governess, who liked and trusted Dion, did nothing to damp their joy.
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But tell me, what brings you here?" asked Drusilla. "I carry a letter from your father to your uncle," he said. "Perhaps you will bring me to the palace?"
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Now, Drusilla knew quite well of her father's wild anger against Dion, and she suspected some mischief in the letter. "My uncle is ill just now," she answered. We shall not give it to him yet. No, no, not yet, I beg you." Then she told him of a great tournament which was to be held in Naples almost immediately. Whoever should prove the best and bravest knight for three days running should marry the Princess Drusilla, daughter of the King of Spain. Think what my sorrow has been since I heard of this!" said she. But you shall try your skill. Only you must enter the lists as a stranger. Above all, the letter must not be delivered till the jousting is over. I command you in this. If blame there be, let it be on my head. Meanwhile you should be practising your feats of arms. I will see that a horse is placed at your service; but live quietly and obscurely till the tournament takes place. Not far from here live an old couple, a peasant and his wife. They are good friends of my governess, and they will take you in if she asks them."
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THE ITALIAN FAIRY BOOK
Dion went to the cottage, and was well received by the old couple. When he told them he came from Spain they

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were much interested. Indeed, from the very first moment the old woman conceived a great affection for him.
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THE ITALIAN FAIRY BOOK
Now it became known at the King's Court that an unknown Spaniard was to enter for the great prize of

the three days' tournament. He was sent for by the
council who were arranging the affair.
"Are you a Knight?" they asked.
"No, that I am not," he replied; "but I have been
trained in arms like a King's son." That would not do,
they replied, and he went to Drusilla in despair.
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If you are not a Knight, a King's daughter can make
you one." She bade him kneel down before her, and
then bade him rise up a Knight in the service of the
Daughter of Spain. So Dion the Knight went to the
tournament, and for two days he was victor. But it was
whispered that a certain competitor had not yet shown
his full strength and skill; that he was reserving himself
for the last day; that he was a doughty champion, alto-
gether unconquerable, and was called one of the wonders
of the world. And the talk of the city was that, brave
and skilful as Dion had proved himself to be, he would
be as chaff before the mighty wind of the champion's
onslaught on the morrow. So Dion went back to the
peasant's cottage altogether disheartened.
Now, earlier that evening the peasant had said to his
wife, "Wife, I have a mind to go out and read the stars."
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The stars are liars," said the old woman.
"The stars cannot lie," returned her husband ;
I may read them wrong."
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but
Then he went out and read the stars, and once more
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he read in them that his son should be King of Spain.
"Alas! alas! " cried the old man, but I have no son!"
He went home to his wife and told her, and they wept
together, for they had never ceased to mourn the child
they had lost twenty years ago.
"Now," said the woman,
stars do lie."
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you must own that the
...
"The stars cannot lie," answered her husband
and at that very moment their guest came in, weary after
the tournament, and dispirited about the morrow.
They attended to his wants, and when he was refreshed
he asked them why they had been weeping.
"We were thinking of our son whom we lost when
he was a baby, twenty years ago," answered the
woman.
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We heard that
How did that happen?" asked the young man.
And they told him the story of the meeting with the strayed huntsman, who was evidently some great personage, and of all its evil consequences.
a servant had been hired to steal and to kill our child, but that the assassin left him alive in the forest.
searched, but found no trace of him, and we fear he was devoured by wild beasts."
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"Now that is strange," said their guest. "Twenty years ago I was picked up, a helpless babe, in that very forest by a good gentleman of Sora, who treated me as his son. Tell me, if your son were alive, how should you know him?”

"He has the mark of a royal crown on his right arm," cried the old woman, excitedly.
And the young man plucked up his sleeve and showed the mark, larger now and more distinct. Then there was great joy in that cottage. They embraced and mingled their tears, and embraced again. But next moment the father was again sorrowful.

"Alas, dear son," he said, we get you back only to lose you again! We are humble folks, and you are destined to be the King of Spain."
"The King of Spain! What are you thinking of? I am more likely to be a beggar. The King of Spain I have deeply offended, and to-morrow, without his knowledge, I am going to fight for his daughter's hand with the champion of the world. I shall certainly be defeated, and thus shall lose the lady I love so well. What will become of me then I do not know, but at least I have found my parents, and now I will be a dutiful son, and while I can work for you, you shall never want."

"Defeated!" cried his mother. Impossible! The stars say you are going to be King of Spain."
"And the stars said so the night you were born," added his father.
So Dion went to the tournament next day with a high heart, and the champion of the world was as chaff before the wind of his might and power. Dion unhorsed him every time.
Then the King of Naples sent for the victor and said:

"You have won a great prize. Here is the Princess Drusilla. Take her. I will write to my brother, the King of Spain, that he has got a right brave son-in-law."

Then Dion drew out the letter. "I am in truth a
The King of Naples
messenger from the King of Spain."
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took the letter, and as he read it his brow darkened.
What is this? Who are you? My brother orders me
to have you hanged. What crime have you committed ?
But whoever you are, my niece cannot marry a dead
man. And my word to you is pledged. In the meanwhile
you must be placed under guard till I see my brother of
Spain."
"Marriage first, uncle!" said Drusilla. "A crowned
King may not break his word. Prison after, if it must
be. We will share it together. Does he look like a
criminal?”
"No," answered her uncle; "but what of your father's
letter?"
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Criminal?" said the King's Chamberlain, coming in.
That youth a criminal! No one shall say so before
me. He is Dion, my foster-son."
"Don Lodovico! Don Lodovico!" cried the young
man, throwing himself into the Chamberlain's arms.
Then there were explanations, and relating of adven-
tures; and lo! as they talked, a messenger arrived,
dressed in mourning, from Spain. He came to say that
the King of Spain was dead, that Drusilla was to forgive
him for his harshness, and that if his servant Dion were
34

still alive-which he devoutly hoped-he was to be let
go free.
So Dion married the Princess Drusilla. They mourned
for a time for the crafty old King, who had, however,
died repentant. Then they went back to Spain, where
Dion was crowned. And one of the first things he did
was to build a high tower, where his father could sit and
read the stars. By their aid he foretold many events,
and the King, his son, was thus able to take steps in time
to prevent many misfortunes to his country. Thus he
won the name of being the wisest King in the world.
And Don Lodovico lived at his Court as Ambassador from
the Court of Naples.
35

LIONBRUNO
PART I. THE FAIRY AURELIA
A FISHERMAN sat watching his wife baking a cake. It
was a rich and pretty cake, not just one for everyday.
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What are you making that for?" he asked.
Surely you haven't forgotten that it is our youngest boy's birthday to-morrow," answered his wife. "Thirteen he is. How the years pass!"
The husband grew suddenly pale. "I had forgotten," he said. "I had forgotten." He sat by the fireside dejected and sad. His face was hidden in his hands, and when his wife turned round she saw him shaken by sobs, and his tears were falling on the hearth.
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What is the matter, my good Luca ? What has come over you ?
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For some time she could not get a word from him, but at last he told her his trouble. "You remember the time before our youngest son Lionbruno was born ? We were very poor. We were often hungry. There seemed no fish left in the sea."
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"I remember, I remember," she answered. But we've been well off this many a year. What's the use of calling up old sorrows?"
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"But did you never wonder how luck came to us so suddenly ?
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"Yes," said the woman. "I did at first, but I got used to it."
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"Well, listen," said Luca. "One day I was in sore straits. Out in my boat I kept thinking of you and the children with nothing to eat at home, and hardly a stick of furniture left. For a week or more I had not caught a fish that would fetch a penny. Then out of the sea there rose up a strange dark shape, very horrible to look at, and fear struck into my heart. The creature called me by my name, and asked what ailed me. Poverty, just poverty,' I answered. He told me that might be cured. My children should never want for a good meal -on one condition. 'What is the condition?' I demanded. 'You have sons enough and to spare,' said he, 'and I'm always in want of stout lads. Keep those you have, but give me the next son born to you, and luck will be yours for the rest of your life.' Well, it did not seem likely we should have any more children, but I would not promise at first. 'My wife would never consent,' said I. 'Oh,' replied the monster, 'she would have him for thirteen years.' Then again I thought of all the hardships we suffered, and I promised. 'Bring him to the seashore on his thirteenth birthday,' he said, and vanished. In less than a year after our dear Lionbruno was born, the best and handsomest of all our

children. I dared not tell you his fate. I have tried
37

to forget it, and not to count the years. But to-morrow
he must go, for the monster will not forget. Ah me!
Ah me!"
The mother wept, lamented, and protested. Next day
she hid the boy, but his father, fearing some terrible
calamity would befall the household if he failed to keep
his promise, went in search of him, found him, and took
him along to the seashore. He could not bear to see
his son carried off, so leaving him there, without a word
of farewell he hurried back to his grief-stricken home.
Lionbruno was playing in his father's boat, never
guessing the fate that hung over him, when, suddenly,
out of the water there rose a dark monster of terrible
aspect. "The Orc!" he cried, but he did not budge.
Come with me, my child," said a voice. The hour
has arrived."
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But the lad looked the horrible creature in the face
and said, Come with you? No!" It was not an
easy thing to face the hideous Orc without flinching,
and the creature was so much astonished that a mere
child should resist him, that he paused a moment ere
he put out the claws that would clutch the boy and drag
him down below the sea. That moment gave Lionbruno
his great chance.
For just then the Fairy Princess Aurelia was walking
near, though unseen by either; and when she saw the
little stripling prepare to resist her old enemy, the Black
Orc, she was much pleased. "That's a lad of spirit,"
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It was not an easy
thing to face the
hideous Or

she said, "and he deserves a kinder fate. He'd better
serve me than that odious monster." So she signed
to an eagle who was in attendance on her, and next
moment Lionbruno was seized by the hair of his head
and carried to the fairy palace, which stood on a far-away
seashore.
Think of the rage of the cheated monster! But he
could do nothing, for the power of the fairy Aurelia was
greater than his. He might trouble the waters, and spoil
the fishing, but with grown-up sons to work for him in the
fields and vineyards, Luca was not much worse off than

before.
In the fairy palace Lionbruno lived a happy, merry life. Sometimes he was in attendance on the Princess. At other times he played with the fairies and with those other mortal youths whom the Princess had adopted. He rode, he hunted, he learned all kinds of knightly exercises, and when seven years had passed he had grown to be a tall, handsome, accomplished young man, the comeliest that ever was seen. Then the fairy Aurelia married him.
His happiness was almost perfect, but not quite; for he felt a great longing to see his old home, his parents and his brothers, and to share with them some of his good fortune. He did not need to tell his wish. Aurelia guessed it and granted him leave. Moreover, she gave him rich presents for all his kinsfolk, and sent him off splendidly clad, and with an equipage that the greatest

prince might have envied. One precious gift for himself she brought him as he was taking leave of her a magic ring with a flashing stone in it. "Rub this ring," she said,

and whatever you desire most at the moment shall be yours. Now, dear Lionbruno, hasten back. I give you but a month's leave. And, remember, that all will go well with you, on one condition. You must never boast of me. If you do, you will bitterly repent it."
Lionbruno promised, and away he went. In a second he was sped far on his way by her magic, so that in what part of the world stood the fairy palace was quite hidden from him. In his old village nobody knew him, but thought he was some great prince. Not even his mother recognised him, till he spoke of things that had happened in the days of his childhood. "And I thought you devoured by a monster!" she cried. Her joy was past description, and so was his father's. Then he brought out the presents for them, such things as they had never set eyes on before. Besides, he added to them by means of his magic ring. His father had now lands and a grand mansion; his mother ruled over a household of servants; and his brothers were fine gallants with jewelled swords by their sides. But all their joy was turned to sorrow when they learned that Lionbruno could pay them only a short visit; and, indeed, it was hard for Lionbruno to tear himself away from them. But he thought of Aurelia, her commands and her goodness, and with promises of return he said farewell.

Now, on his way back to the fairy palace-the horses

knew the road and needed no directions-Lionbruno heard a king's herald proclaim a great tournament. None but princes and knights of rare skill might enter the lists; but the prize was splendid-nothing less than the hand of the King's daughter, the Princess Claudia. Of course Lionbruno did not want to marry any king's daughter; he had the loveliest bride in all the world. But he was tempted to show the Court and all the assembled princes what a fine fellow he was; and then he was quite sure he could be victor, if he chose; for had he not his magic ring, obedient to his wishes? So he entered the lists. Now, each competitor had to mount his horse, and, while riding, to throw his spear and pierce the jewelled eye of a bird that swung high in the air. Hundreds of fine knights made a trial; Lionbruno alone pierced the jewel. But at the end of the contest he had disappeared. The same thing happened the next day. And on the third he was again victor, but before he left the field the soldiers stopped him and led him before the King.
The King paid him many compliments on his skill and his modesty. "Now shall you have your reward," he said, and he called the Princess Claudia to come forward. He was just going to put her hand in that of the victor when Lionbruno stepped back.
Bowing low, he said, "Madam, I cannot have the honour. I have a bride at home."
"Why then did you enter the lists?" cried the King.

"You have mocked us. But you have your punishment for insulting us. You will go back to some miserable, ugly creature whom you can never love again after having seen the beautiful lady whom you might have married."
"Your Majesty has, indeed, a lovely daughter," said Lionbruno, "but my wife surpasses her in beauty and every grace." (It was out of his mouth before he remembered his vow never to boast of the fairy Aurelia.)
There was an uproar at his words. "Let us see her then!" they cried on all sides. And the King's voice rose above the others, saying: "It is easy to make vain boasts. We command you to prove them. Send for your wife. If in three days she does not come, you shall die."
"She lives a long way off, your Majesty."
But they told him he was a liar, a braggart, and no true knight. So poor Lionbruno rubbed his ring hard, saying to it, "Tell my dear Princess to come to me without delay." Aurelia refused; for had not he broken his word? Instead, she sent her kitchenmaid.
Suddenly she appeared in the hall before them all, a girl so beautiful that there was a general cry of "Oh! He spoke the truth! What a lovely creature!"
But Lionbruno was indignant. "That my lady?" he

said. "I should think not. That is her kitchenmaid."
What must his lady be like then? But the King was suspicious. He again accused him of lying, and as his Majesty angrily left the hall, he once more reminded him

of the punishment awaiting him if he could not prove his boast.
Next day Lionbruno was brought again into the King's presence. He rubbed the ring very hard, and in a low, pleading voice said, "Aurelia, my Princess, come to my help."
Suddenly there appeared a lady whom all eyes turned to look at, so fair she was and graceful. "There she is at last!" they cried. "After all he spoke the truth."
But Lionbruno cried out, "That my bride? Why, that's the goose-herd."
Oh! if the goose-herd was like that, what must her mistress be? But the King spoke sternly, and said, "No more vain boasting! I give you till to-morrow. If your wife comes not then, I deliver you over to the executioner. We will not be mocked." Then he sent him out of his presence.
Once more Lionbruno stood before the King. It was his last chance. He could see the gallows through the window. "Aurelia, my Aurelia," he pleaded, as he rubbed the ring, "come to the help of your Lionbruno, whom death threatens."
The door swung open, and suddenly all eyes rested on a lady of such dazzling beauty as they had never seen before. Not a sound could be heard in the hall, and the King sat motionless as a statue in his astonishment and admiration. There could be no doubt this time. It was Aurelia.

She walked up to where Lionbruno stood, but instead of giving him the affectionate greeting he hoped for, she seized his hand, took off the ring from his finger, and flicked him scornfully on the cheek. "That for your broken promise!" she said. "If I am your beautiful wife, as you boast, come and find me!" And she vanished.
The King, seeing how she had repulsed Lionbruno, and taken away his ring, cried out to his guards, "Seize the impostor! Seize him! To the gallows with him!"
And had not Lionbruno taken to his heels, slipped through the crowd like an eel, and made use of all the agility he had learned in the fairy palace, it would have been all over with him.
PART II. IN THE SHOES OF SWIFTNESS
He escaped, but he was now in a very bad case. His lady was offended. His ring was gone, and with it all

his power. He was as poor as ever he had been; and he did not know in what part of the world her palace was. But not for a moment did he think of losing heart. He had to find Aurelia, and to gain her forgiveness. So he set off to find her, and on foot, of course; for his horses and carriages had disappeared. He walked and he walked and he walked all day long, and every day, from dawn to nightfall, till he was weary, weary, weary. And of every one he met he asked the way to the palace of the Princess Aurelia. "Never heard of

such a person," was all the answer he ever got. He asked men; he asked beasts; he asked birds. But none of them could help him. And on he went again, and walked and walked. And the years passed. But he never once thought of giving up his search.

At last one day he came upon two ruffians who were quarrelling over a heap of things they had stolen. They couldn't agree at all about their shares; and seeing Lion-bruno, who looked like an honest man, they asked him to judge between them. He consented. After examining the money and jewels, he divided them as fairly as possible, and gave to each his portion.

"But that is not all," they said. "There is this pair of shoes, and there is this mantle."

66

66

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They don't seem worth much," said Lionbruno.

Oh, but they are!" cried the robbers. These are the famous Shoes of Swiftness. Whoever puts them on

And whoever puts on this

Such things would be most

can go as fast as the wind.

mantle cannot be seen at all.

useful in our trade." But they could not agree; for each wanted to have both. And again they asked Lionbruno to judge between them.

"But how can I judge unlesss I put them on, and see if they are really as valuable as you say, and find out which is the better of the two."

"Put them on!" cried the robbers. "And then divide them fairly between us."

So Lionbruno threw the mantle over his arm, and put

on the boots. In a second he was up the hill as if he had been the wind, far above the two rascals. "The boots are good!" he shouted down.

"Now for the mantle!" they cried, as they began to toil up after him.

a
"Do you see me now?" he asked, as he proceeded to
put the mantle over his head.
"We see your legs."
"Do you see me now?" he cried again, when it had
fallen about him.
"No!" they called out.
"Then you'll never see me any more!" said Lionbruno.
47

And off he set in the Shoes of Swiftness and the Magic
Mantle. They could not even see in what direction he
went, though he passed them on the hill on his way down
to pick up some money for his journey out of their stolen
heap.
When the two robbers knew that they were cheated,
they began to quarrel again more violently than before.
Each laid the blame on the other. Then they came to
blows, and fought till they were black and blue, after
which they separated in great wrath, and each went his
own way, empty and bare.
But Lionbruno was far on his way by this time. He
went like the wind; but neither shoes nor mantle could
tell him the road back to his Princess. And however far he
went, the folks were no better informed. His was a weary
life! At last one evening at the foot of a hill, he met an
old woman, who looked very tousled and weather-beaten.
66
Good evening, mother," he said. "Do you know if
the Princess Aurelia lives about these parts?
66
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What should I know of Princesses?" she answered.
"Well, then, perhaps you could give me a lodging for
the night and some supper, for I am very weary and quite
famished."
66
"That I cannot," said the old woman. My house
is not my own. It belongs to my seven sons; and they
would not welcome you."
"But, good mother, have pity! I have travelled
twelve thousand miles since morning."
48

!
"Oh, that's nothing!" she said. "My sons do that
any day. Now, don't keep me talking. I must hurry
home to get their supper ready; and if they saw me
talking to you, who knows but they would tear you in
pieces. My sons are wild, and terribly strong."
Lionbruno slipped on his mantle, and said, "Do you

see me, mother ?
د و
"No!" she answered.
66
د و
Where have you gone to ?
"Well, they won't see me either unless I please. Now
take me home with you, and give me some food."
So she took him home with her to her house, which
was no house, but a great roomy cavern on the hillside.
She gave him food; and then he sat down in a corner
to rest. Ere long he heard strange sounds of puffing
and panting and sighing and blowing; and suddenly
he felt cold breaths striking on his face, from this side
and that. The sand on the cavern floor whirled about;
and Lionbruno had to tuck his mantle well about him
lest it should be blown up over his head and some part
of him should be seen. He wondered and wondered
what was happening, for he hardly dared peep out of
his corner; but at last he knew who were the old woman's
sons. They were the Seven Winds.
66
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Good evening, my sons! said the old woman.
"Are you all here ?
د و
"I'm here," said the North Wind, " and the West, my
brother, is just round the corner. The others are coming.
What a smell of human flesh!
د و

"Human flesh? Nonsense!" said the old woman.
"It's your supper you're smelling."
Then more puffing and panting, and in came the rest,
hustling one another in the doorway.
66
What a smell of human flesh!" cried the South Wind.
"If I could get my teeth into it!"
66
Human flesh? Nonsense!" said the old woman.
"It's your good supper you're smelling, and here it is."
When they had all eaten, and were calmer, and almost
falling asleep, the old woman said, "I know what you
smelt when you came home. A man passed by to-day.
He asked the way to the palace of the Princess Aurelia."
66
66
Did he?" said the North Wind. Well, he'll wear
out many pairs of shoes before he gets there."
66
Of course," said the East Wind, "every wind that
blows knows her palace. Only last week I was knocking

at the doors and windows myself."
"And I this very morning," said South. "I had a
look in. But she isn't what she used to be. She is wasting
away."
(Think how closely Lionbruno was listening in his
corner!)
66
66
د و
What's the matter with her? asked the old woman.
Lost her husband, they say. She'll die if he does not
come back."
(Lionbruno was listening, listening.)
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Only
Yes, that is so," said the wind of the South.
yesterday I tried a little jest on her, whirling her curtains
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Over Hill and, sale over plain forest
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about, and the curls on her head. Couldn't get a smile
out of her. She is in a poor way. Well, I shall be going
there again to-morrow, and I'll see if she is still alive."
Then they all went to sleep.
What a long night it seemed to Lionbruno! But
morning came at last; and just as the South Wind shook
himself awake, and was saying, "Good-bye, mother! I'm
off for my day's work," he darted out of the cavern, pulled
off his mantle and stood at the door.
66
Good-morning, your Windship! I'd be glad of your
company on the road. I'm seeking the palace of the Princess
Aurelia, and am looking to you to show me the way."
Oh, how the South Wind laughed! A mere man
to talk of keeping company with a wind! He laughed
and laughed again till Lionbruno was nearly blown over.
But he stood his ground. After me then!" said the
South Wind, and off he flew.
66
"Not after you!" cried Lionbruno, casting on his
mantle. "With you!" And his boots were as good
Over hill and dale, over plain

as the wings of the wind.
and forest he kept pace, till he came to the palace on
the far seashore which he knew so well, and had feared
he might never see again.
"At last!" shouted Lionbruno.
"
Oh, you're there!" said the South Wind. Lionbruno
cast off his mantle; and there he was.
66
What are men coming to?" said the Wind. "But
you're not inside yet. And if the row of lions that guard
52

the Princess's door catch a glimpse of you, you'll be but a
mouthful to them."
66
But they shall not see me," and he put on his mantle
once more. One step of his magic-booted feet and he was
in at the door, another and he was upstairs and into
the Princess's chamber.
Aurelia was lying on the bed, pale and weak. Her
servant had put down a basin of broth beside her, but
she would not taste a drop.
"It smells good," thought Lionbruno to himself. He
took it up, and gulped it down. To keep pace with the
wind gives one an appetite.
66
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Who has eaten up my broth ? said Aurelia. And
her maid when she came back exclaimed, "Dear me! She
has actually eaten it all. She must be much better!"
And she ran away to fetch more food, some chicken
and jelly and grapes, which she set down on the table by
the bedside. Next moment they were gone. Only the
empty plates were left.
66
The maid cried out in alarm. Someone very hungry
is hiding in my room," said Aurelia. "I know nobody
with such an appetite except my dear Lionbruno, whom
I shall never see again. Ah me! Ah me!"
Lionbruno could bear it no longer. He cast off his
mantle, and stood before her, and then knelt by her
bedside, saying, "My Princess, I have travelled the world
over to find you. Never a day have I stopped on the
road. Will you forgive me?
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53

She rose from her bed crying, "Lionbruno! Lion-
bruno! I have not had a moment's peace and happiness
since I sent you away."
They embraced, and laughed, and cried. And the

roses came back to Aurelia's face. Her beauty and her health returned on the spot. Hand-in-hand they went downstairs, and summoned the household, and told the great news. To-morrow we shall give a great feast to all our subjects," she said. And messengers were sent off, on the instant, north, south, east and west with the invitations.
66
"But the lions at your gate will frighten our guests," said Lionbruno.
66
Aurelia rubbed her ring; and in came the lions and knelt down at her feet. " I only gave them back their fierceness while I lay ill and the castle lacked my protection and yours. From now they are your docile servants"; and they fawned on Lionbruno, and owned him master from that moment.
"Have you no friends to invite to the feast?" said Aurelia.
" I would fain see my parents and my brothers."
She rubbed the ring, and, lo! Lionbruno's kinsfolk were all about him. They were the chief guests at the great feast on the morrow.
66
They feasted, they danced, so brave and so fine-
Now tell me your story, for I've told you mine."
54

From the Abruzal
THE CLEVER GIRL
A COUNTRYMAN and his wife at work in the fields left their little daughter in her cradle at home. An old, old woman crept softly, softly in, and kissed the child on her eyes and her forehead. "I bring you two gifts," she said, "Beauty and Wit." When the parents returned they hardly knew the little one again, so beautiful had she become. And when she grew to be a big girl, none in all the countryside was so lovely or so clever.
Now, one day, when he was working in his vineyard, the peasant found a mortar made of solid gold. "It's of little use to me," he said, "but what a fine gift for the King! I'll set off this very minute." And he ran into the house to put on his Sunday coat. But Pina, his daughter, said, "You'd better do no such thing. If you show the mortar to the King, he'll only say, 'What is the use of a mortar without a pestle?'" "Non-sense!" replied her father. And off he went.
He made his way into the Palace, threw himself before the King, and said, "Please, your Majesty, will you accept this gift ?"
"Very nice! Very nice!" replied the King, taking the mortar in his hand. "But where is the pestle?"
"I found no pestle," said the peasant.
55

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"Found a mortar without a pestle? Impossible!
You are keeping it back. If you do not bring me the
pestle by to-morrow morning I'll have you thrown into
prison for a thief!"
The poor countryman stared, and then as he was turn-
ing away, said, "Ah, what a wise girl is my daughter!"
"What's that you're saying?" asked the King.
"Only that my daughter Pina told me your Majesty
would be sure to ask for the pestle instead of being pleased
with the mortar alone. She said I was a fool to give it
you."
"Then your daughter is a great deal cleverer than
yourself." Now, the King was not a bad man at heart,
but rather greedy, and very capricious, rather like a spoilt
child. "Hark ye," he went on, "I'll give that clever
daughter of yours something to do. See! Take her
this flax and tell her to spin from it linen enough to make
shirts for my whole army." And he handed the poor
dazed man the flax, and distaffs and spindles made of
fish-bones. "If she refuses, or if she is not able to do it,
I'll have you both put in prison. Ha! ha! Good-bye!"
There was a fine task to take home to his poor daughter!
But Pina only laughed.
"Leave me the flax," she said; "and take the distaffs
and spindles back; and tell the King that I am spinning
busily; and that I shall make the shirts for his whole
army when he has made me a loom out of these fish-
bones."
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THE ITALIAN FAIRY BOOK
You may think that the peasant did not like to take
such a message to the King. But he took it, neverthe-
less. Perhaps the King would be in a more reasonable
humour this morning. When he repeated what Pina
had said, the King stared in amazement. “Well, it's a
bold daughter you've got, my man! She is no common
girl. I should like to see her; and perhaps I can find
her a husband. Tell her she may stop spinning the yarn;
and she must come and see me here. But there is one
condition "-the King loved to tease-" she must come
neither with clothes on, nor naked, neither walking on
her feet, nor riding on horse, ass, or mule. Ha! ha !
Good-day to you, my man!"

"What next?" said the poor distracted father. "For all her cleverness this task is beyond her."
He gave her the King's message; and she only laughed. "Oh, that's easy enough!" she said.
Then she went to her room, took off her clothes, let down her long thick hair, which fell to her feet, and drew it close round her by a great net. Then she went out to the field, caught her father's old ram, put one foot over its back, and hopped along the road to the town on the other. Thus she reached the Palace.
When the King saw her he laughed aloud in great good humour; and he said, "One could never be dull with such a wife! Pina, will you marry me?"
So the King married Pina, the peasant's clever daughter, and they lived happily and merrily together. But

one day, when he was riding out in the country, the King spied a fine horse grazing in a meadow. "That's a splendid animal!" he said. "I have not its like in my stud."
And he ordered his servant to seize it and bring it back to the royal stables. Of course, the farmer who owned the horse was very angry, and came to claim it; but the King sent him away scornfully. Queen Pina, who had been present, begged him to act justly, to restore the horse and beg the farmer's pardon, or else offer to buy it for a fair price. But her husband was very obstinate, and refused.
So the Queen sent secretly for the farmer, and suggested to him a means whereby he might get back his horse. The farmer listened and acted on her advice. With a net thrown about him, he went up and down the town, and round and round the outside of the Palace, crying, "Ho! ho! the fisherman! Who wants to catch fish with me?" Up and down the town he went with this cry, and round and round the Palace, stopping always before the King's own windows. At last the King could stand it no longer, and he bawled out, "Be off with you! Would you have us catching fish in the streets? You're a fine fisher, you country bumpkin! And it's a fine catch you'll get in my gutters."
"And you're a fine fisher of horses!" retorted the farmer. "And a fine haul you made in my meadow!"
And the King, who liked a good answer, laughed heartily, and ordered his servants to give back the horse to its

master. Nevertheless, he was very angry; and when the man had gone, he called for his wife and said, "I know who put the fellow up to that trick. It was you. You have no care for my interests. You like country bumpkins best. Be off with you! Out of my house!"

Then Queen Pina answered, "Very well, your Majesty, I'll go back again to my home. They will be glad to see me, all the country bumpkins. But it is hardly fair I should go away empty-handed. When you married me you said, 'Whatever is most precious in this palace belongs to you!'"
"Oh, take whatever you like! Only, be off with you!"
Now, Pina had some fairy gifts; and by means of one of these she threw her husband into a deep sleep. And when he was fast asleep she ordered a great coach to draw up before the palace door, and had him carried into it. Then she got in herself, and they drove away to her father's cottage. When at last he woke he found Pina sitting by him. But where were they? It seemed a very small place, and the light was dim; and his couch uncommonly hard.
66
Where am I? Where am I?" he cried out in some alarm. What has happened?"
66
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"Only what you ordered," replied Pina. You sent me away, you remember. But you told me I might take with me the most precious thing in the palace. So I did. I brought you!"
60

Then the King laughed, and laughed again, till the cottage rafters rang. And he laughed all the way back in the coach. Of course, Queen Pina sat by him, laughing too. They never parted any more. And their reign was a long and a merry one.
61

THE COCK'S STONE

THERE was once in the city of Black-Grotto a certain man named Minecco, who was so miserably poor that his whole property consisted of a little cock which he had reared upon bread-crumbs. But one morning, being pinched with hunger, he took it into his head to sell the cock. Taking it to the market, he there met two rascally magicians, with whom he made a bargain, selling it to them for half-a-crown. So they told him to take it to their house and they would count him out the money. Then the magicians went their way, and Minecco, following them, overheard them whispering together and saying, "Who would have told us that we should meet with such a piece of good luck, Jennaroné? This cock will make our fortune to a certainty by the stone which, you know, he has in his pate; we will quickly have it set in a ring, and then we shall have everything we can ask for."
"Be quiet, Iacovuchio," answered Jennaroné, "I see

myself rich and can hardly believe it; and I am longing to twist the cock's neck, and give a kick in the face of beggary; for in this world virtue without money goes for nothing, and a man is judged of by his coat."
When Minecco, who had travelled about in the world and eaten bread from more than one oven, heard this

talk, he turned on his heel and scampered off. And running home he twisted the cock's neck, and opening its head found the stone, which he had instantly set in a brass ring. Then, to make a trial of its virtue, he said, "I wish to become a youth eighteen years old."
Hardly had he uttered the words when his blood began to flow more quickly, his nerves became stronger, his limbs firmer, his flesh fresher, his eyes more fiery; his silver hairs were turned to gold; into his empty mouth came back all his teeth; his beard, which had become hard and stubbly, grew fine and soft again. In short, he was changed to a most beautiful youth.
Then he said, "I wish for a splendid palace, and to marry the King's daughter." And lo! there instantly appeared a palace of wonderful magnificence. In the great halls, supported by carved pillars, silver glittered everywhere; he trod upon gold; beautiful pictures drew his eye; jewels dazzled him. Servants swarmed like ants about the place; and the horses and carriages were not to be counted. Indeed there was such a display of riches that when the King came to see it he was amazed ; and willingly gave his daughter Natalizia in marriage to Minecco.
Meanwhile, the magicians, having discovered his great wealth, laid a plan to rob him of his good fortune. Now you must know that Minecco's wife died, but she left a little daughter called Pentella, whom he loved very dearly; and they thought they could get at her father's treasures

through her. So they made a pretty little doll, which played and danced by clockwork; and dressing themselves like merchants they went to the house when Minecco was out and showed it to Pentella. Delighted with it, she asked its price; and they replied it was not to be bought for money, but that she might have it and welcome if she would only do them a favour, which was to let them see the ring which her father possessed. They wished

to take the model and make another like it. Then they would give her the doll without any payment at all.
Pentella, who had never heard the proverb, "Think

well before you buy anything cheap," instantly accepted this offer; and bidding them return the next morning, she promised to ask her father to lend her the ring. So the magicians went away, and when her father returned home Pentella coaxed and caressed him, until at last she persuaded him to give her the ring, making the excuse that she was sad at heart and wished to divert her mind a little.

When the next day came the magicians returned; and no sooner had they the ring in their hands than they instantly vanished, and not a trace of them was to be seen; so that poor Pentella had like to have died with terror.

But when the magicians came to a wood they desired the ring to destroy the spell by which the old man had become young again. And instantly Minecco, who was just at that minute in the presence of the King, was suddenly seen to grow hoary, his hairs to whiten, his forehead to wrinkle, his eyebrows to grow bristly, his eyes to sink in, his face to be furrowed, his mouth to become toothless, his beard to grow bushy, his back to be humped, his legs to tremble, and above all, his glittering garments to turn to rags and tatters!

The King, seeing this miserable beggar seated beside him at table, ordered him to be driven away with blows

and hard words; whereupon Minecco went weeping to his daughter, and asked for the ring to set matters right again. But when he heard of the trick played by the false merchants he was ready to throw himself out of the window, cursing a thousand times the ignorance of Pentella, who for the sake of a silly doll had turned him into a scarecrow. Then he vowed he would travel about the world until he should get tidings of those merchants.

So saying, he threw a cloak about his neck, slung a wallet on his back, drew his sandals on his feet, took a staff in his hand, and leaving his daughter frozen with horror at the mischief she had wrought, he set out on his journey.

On and on he walked till he arrived at the Kingdom of Deep-Hole, inhabited by the mice, where, being taken for a spy of the cats, he was instantly led before Nibbler the King. Then the King asked him who he was, whence he came, and what he was about in that country; and Minecco, after first giving the King a cheese-paring, in sign of tribute, related to him all his misfortunes, one by one. He concluded by saying that he was resolved to continue his toil and travel until he should get tidings of those thievish villains who had robbed him of so precious a jewel.

At these words King Nibbler felt pity gnawing at his heart; and wishing to comfort the poor man, he summoned the mice elders to a council, and asked their opinions

on the misfortunes of Minecco, commanding them to use
all diligence and endeavour to obtain some tidings of
66

Meredith Williams
(He was instantly led before nibbler
The King

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those false merchants. Now, among the rest it happened
that Pecker and Skipjack were present-mice who were
well used to the ways of the world, and had lived for six
years at a tavern of great resort hard by; and they said
to Minecco, "Be of good heart, comrade! matters will
turn out better than you imagine. You must know that
one day, when we were in a room in the hostelry of the
'Horn,' where the most famous men in the world lodge
and make merry, two persons from Hook-Castle came
in, who, after they had eaten their fill and had seen the
bottom of their flagon, fell to talking of a trick they had
played on a certain old man of Black-Grotto, cheating
him out of a stone of great value. ' As for me,' said one
of the rascals, Jennaroné by name, 'I shall never take
it from my finger lest I lose it in my turn.'”
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When Minecco heard this, he told the two mice that
if they would trust themselves in his company, and come
with him to the country where those rogues lived, and
recover the ring for him, he would give them as much
cheese and salt meat as ever they liked, which they might
eat and enjoy with his Majesty King Nibbler. For such
a reward the two mice were willing to go over seas and
mountains; and taking leave of his mousy majesty they
set out.
At last they arrived at Hook-Castle, where the mice
told Minecco to remain under some trees on the brink of
a river, while they went to seek the house of the magicians.
As they knew Jennaroné never took the ring from his
68

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finger they had to resort to a trick to get it from him.
So waiting till the magicians had gone to bed and were
fast asleep, Pecker began to nibble the finger on which
the ring was; whereupon Jennaroné, feeling the smart,
took the ring off and laid it on a table at the head of the
bed. But as soon as Skipjack saw this he popped it into
his mouth. Then they both ran back to find Minecco.
Great indeed was his joy; and as the ring gave him back
his power, he instantly turned the magicians into two
donkeys. On one he rode. The other he loaded with
cheese and bacon, and set off towards Deep-Hole, where,
having given presents to the King and his councillors, he

thanked them for their assistance, praying that no mouse-trap might ever lay hold of them and no cat ever mis-handle them.
Minecco returned to Black-Grotto even more hand-some than before, and was received by the King and by his daughter Pentella with the greatest affection in the world. The two asses remained beasts of burden; but he lived happily with Pentella till the end of his life. As you may think, he was never again so foolish as to take the ring from his finger.

KING FALCON, KING DOLPHIN, AND KING STAG

THE King of the land of Greenhills had three daughters, each more beautiful than the day. And they had three lovers, sons of the King of Fairmead, who had grown up the finest and handsomest princes you can imagine. But yet the King of Greenhills refused to give his daughters to them in marriage; for you must know that a wicked fairy had cast a spell upon the youths, and turned them from three splendid young gallants into a falcon, a stag and a dolphin. "It is only the outside of us that has changed," said they. "If you will not give us your daughters, you shall repent it." And the falcon called all the birds to him, birds of every kind, and said, "Feed upon the leaves and the flowers of the land of Greenhills." So they did, and not a leaf or a flower remained. Then the stag called the goats and the hares and rabbits, and said, "Feed on the young corn and all the crops. Leave not a blade, not a seed behind." So they did; and the land was laid waste. The dolphin, in his turn, called the great monsters of the sea, and said, "Have your will of the King's ships on the water." A great storm arose, and there was not a vessel but was shattered to pieces on the rocky coast of Greenhills.

The King, seeing their vengeance, said, “Well, take my daughters, for I cannot abide your anger." Yet their parents were very unwilling to part with the girls; and ere they went away, their mother gave to each of them a ring, one like unto the other, saying that if they should be parted, and should meet again after many, many years, they might know each other by these rings, which all of their royal house wore when they travelled abroad.
So Princess Fabiella, the eldest, went away with King Falcon to the top of a high mountain, where he had a great palace built for her. There she dwelt like a queen. Vasta, the second, was taken by King Stag to a deep,

dark forest. Yet her mansion in the midst of it was beautiful and splendid, and she was waited on by attendants whom she never saw. As for Rita, the youngest, her dwelling was on a great rock in the middle of the sea, but just as large and wonderful as either of the others Thus they lived for years in luxury and splendour, with their devoted husbands. Yet they were very lonely sometimes.

In the meanwhile a little brother had been born to them; and the Queen of Greenhills used to tell him tales of his beautiful sisters, who had gone away with King Falcon, King Stag, and King Dolphin. One day when Titon had grown tall and strong, he said, "I have a longing to see my sisters. Give me a horse and let me fare forth into the world and look for them." His parents

pleaded and wept, but at last they gave in; and before he left, his mother gave him just such another ring as his sisters had received. So he went forth with horses and dogs and a train of attendants behind him; and he travelled through many lands, north and south, east and west. But never a sign of his sisters did he see.

Some of his servants had
none of them was hardy
By this time he was alone.
dropped off here, some there:
enough to follow him all the way. At length he found himself at the top of the very mountain where stood King Falcon's palace. Just as he was looking at the wonders of its outside, admiring the marble walls, the golden windows, the silver doors, Fabiella looked out and said, "Who are you, fair stranger, and whence come you?" Titon told his name, the name of his father and his country.

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Then you are my dear unknown brother," cried Fabiella, who had caught sight of the ring upon his finger. She came down to the door, embraced him tenderly, brought him in, and treated him with the greatest kindness. Nevertheless, after a while she begged him to hide. For who knows, she said to herself, how King Falcon would take his coming. So she hid him in a closet.

When King Falcon came back he noticed that his wife seemed sad, and he asked her the reason. "I am homesick," she answered. And he replied, Have patience yet awhile, my beloved. I cannot take you

home till I have regained my own shape." "But may I not have someone here who is of my own kin?" she asked. "The way is far and the road is rough," he answered. Who would dare the journey?"
"But if someone were to come?
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"Then he should be welcome as one of my own flesh and blood," replied the King.
Thereupon Fabiella drew the young prince forth, and said, "This is Titon, my brother, who has come all the long road from Greenhills to see me."
And King Falcon bade him welcome, saying, "Command in this house as if you were its master."
Titon stayed on with them for months, living in great comfort and joy. But at length a longing came to him to see his second sister, Vasta. As he was going away, King Falcon presented him with one of his feathers, saying, "Take this and keep it safe. If ever you are in sore need, cast it down and cry, 'Come! Come!' Then you shall see what will happen."
It was a long, long winding road to the great forest where Vasta dwelt; but he found the place at last, for going into a garden to eat fruit when he was hungry, the mistress of the garden, who was Vasta herself, looked at him closely and said, "Surely this must be the son of my mother."
He told his tale. They compared their rings; and then they embraced each other tenderly. Here in the forest he dwelt a while, welcomed and caressed by King
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Stag and his wife. When he declared his wish to go in search of his third sister, Rita, King Stag gave him one of his hairs, telling him that one day it would serve him well in his need.
He had to make a long, long voyage in a great ship before he came on Rita's palace on the rock. He found her at last, and was received by her and King Dolphin no less kindly than by the others: and he lived with them in great happiness for a time. At last one day he said, "Now I desire to go home to see my parents, and tell them of my sisters' welfare." So he took his leave after receiving from King Dolphin a scale which would serve him in his need.
He thought to go home straight, but it turned out otherwise. For one day, travelling through a dark forest, he came on a tower in the middle of a lake, and there at a window he beheld a beautiful damsel sitting beside a horrid, ugly dragon that was fast asleep. As soon as she saw Titon, she leant out of the window, and in a whisper that carried over the water she said, "O fair youth, here am I alone with this hideous monster. Deliver me from him, I pray you. I am the daughter of the King of

Clearvale, and I was taken by force away from my father's house."
"But how can I help you?" asked Titon. "The lake is wide; the tower is high; and that dragon will eat you up if he wakes and sees me swimming across. But wait a moment. I have thought of something." Then

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Beside a great ugly Dragon.

he cast on the ground the Falcon's feather, the Stag's hair, and the Dolphin's scale, and cried, "Come! Come!" In a trice he saw before him his three brothers-in-law, the Falcon, the Stag, and the Dolphin. "We are here," they said. "Now command us." Titon pointed to the tower and the damsel. "Save, oh, save this unhappy maiden!" he cried. "Break down her hideous prison. I will take her home, and she shall be my wife." Thereupon the Falcon called his brothers, the griffins; and they flew over to the window, seized the damsel, and bore her across the lake to Titon's side. And the nearer she was the fairer he thought her. But while he stood admiring her loveliness, the dragon awoke, and began to make his way to the shore to catch hold of the young prince that he might drown him. Instantly King Stag called for his friends, a troop of lions and tigers; and in another minute there was not much left of the dragon.
Then said the Dolphin, " It is my turn to do my share. This tower is evil. Never again shall it imprison anyone." So he called to the Sea, and the Sea came up and covered it, and no one ever beheld it any more.
Great was the joy of Titon! He thanked his brothers-in-law with all his heart, and called on the fair maiden to do the same. Her thanks were sweetly given; but the animals answered, "Nay, it is we who are grateful. Know that we have been bound in these shapes till we should save a King's daughter from great peril. This

fair lady has given us our chance of release. The moment of our change is at hand. Lo, behold us!" And, indeed, as they spoke, Falcon, Dolphin and Stag vanished, and there stood before Titon and the maiden three princes as fair as ever were seen.
Titon cried aloud for joy. "Why, oh, why do not

my father and mother see you? Come back with me at once. Let us all get ready for our journey to Greenhills." And there was waiting for them a great carriage drawn by six lions; and in it they began their stately journey to the land of Greenhills. The first night they put up at an inn. But while Titon and the damsel slept, the three brothers travelled back to their own palaces, on mountain, on sea-rock, and in forest, and each one brought away his wife. In the morning the eight met at the inn, and they were fellow-travellers for the rest of the way. They received the warmest of welcomes from the King and Queen of Greenhills. Nor did they alone rejoice. The Kings of Fairmead and Clearvale came to the happy gathering, and were present at the wedding of Prince Titon and the released maiden. In their human shapes the three princes lived long and happily with their beautiful wives. I never heard that they went back to their fine palaces on the mountain-top, in the dark forest, and on the rock in the midst of the sea.

VARDIELLO

ONCE upon a time there was a woman called Grannonia, of great sense and judgment, who had a son named Vardiello, the greatest booby and simpleton in the whole country round. Nevertheless, she doted on him so much that she was for ever caressing and fondling him as if he were the finest creature in the world.

Now, Grannonia had a hen that was sitting upon a nest of eggs, in which she placed all her hope, expecting to have a fine brood of chickens, and to make a good profit off them. And having one day to go out on some business, she called to her son and said to him, "Pretty son of your own mother, listen to what I have to say. Keep your eye upon the hen, and if she should get up off the nest, look sharp and drive her back; for otherwise the eggs will get cold, and then we shall have neither eggs nor chickens."

"Leave it to me," replied Vardiello. "You are not speaking to deaf ears."

"One thing more," said his mother. "Look ye, my blessed son. In yonder cupboard is a pot full of poisonous things. Take care that ugly Sin does not tempt you to touch them, for they would make you stretch your legs in a trice."

"Heaven forbid!" replied Vardiello. "Poison indeed will not tempt me. But you have done wisely to give me the warning; for if I had got at it, I should certainly have eaten it all up."

Thereupon the mother went out, leaving Vardiello

behind; and, as he had nothing to do, he went into the garden to dig holes, which he covered with branches and earth, to catch any little thievish children who might come to steal the fruit. As he was in the midst of his work, he saw the hen come running out; whereupon he began to cry, "Hish! hish! This way! No, that way! Hish! Hish!" But the hen paid no attention; and Vardiello, still calling "Hish! hish!" began to stamp with his feet, to throw his cap at her, and after the cap a cudgel, which hit her just upon the pate; and she fell dead at his feet.

When Vardiello saw this sad accident he bethought himself how to remedy the evil. In order to prevent the eggs growing cold he sat himself down upon the nest, and so heavily that in a moment he had made an omelet of the eggs. In despair at what he had done, he was on the point of knocking his head against the wall. But grief, they say, brings appetite; and he began to feel so hungry that he resolved to eat up the hen. So he plucked her, stuck her on a spit, made a great fire, and set to work to roast her. When she was cooked, Vardiello, to do everything in due order, spread a fine cloth upon an old chest; and then taking a flagon, went down

into the cellar to draw some wine. But just as he was in the midst of drawing the wine, he heard a noise, indeed, a perfect uproar in the house, like the clattering of horses' hoofs. Whereat, bolting upstairs in alarm, he saw a big tom-cat running off with the hen, spit and all, and another cat chasing after him crying out for a share of the spoil.

Vardiello darted upon the first cat like an unchained lion, and after pursuing her through every hole and corner of the house, recovered the hen. But he had left the tap of the barrel open, and meanwhile all the wine had run out, and when he went back to the cellar and found this, he fell to crying bitterly. At last he thought of a plan for remedying the mischief, or at least of preventing his mother finding out what had happened. Taking a sack of flour full to the mouth, he emptied it over the wine on the cellar floor.

But when he reckoned up on his fingers all the misfortunes that had befallen him, he felt he must have lost for ever his mother's good opinion; and he resolved that she should never see him again alive. So, thrusting his hand into the jar of pickled walnuts, which his mother had told him were poisoned, he began to eat them; nor did he stop till the jar was empty. Then he went and hid himself in the oven.

In the meanwhile his mother returned; and getting no answer when she called him, she thought some evil must have befallen him.

"Vardiello! Vardiello!" she

cried, louder and louder. "Are you deaf that you don't hear? Have you the cramp that you don't run? Where are you hidden, you naughty fellow? Where are you, you gallows-faced rogue?"
At last she heard a piteous voice. "Here I am. Here I am in the oven. But you'll never see me again alive, mother!"
"Why so?" asked the poor woman.
"Because I am poisoned," replied her son.
"Alas! alas!" cried Grannonia. "How came that about? Who gave you the poison?"
Then Vardiello told her all the silly things he had done, and said he wished to die, and not remain any longer a laughing-stock to the world. The poor woman had enough to do to drive this whimsey out of the boy's head. But she petted him, gave him some nice sweetmeats, and at last he forgot his fear about the pickled walnuts, believed her when she told him they were not poisonous at all, and crept out of the oven.
Then she gave him a piece of fine cloth, and bade him go and sell it, but cautioned him against doing business with folk of too many words.
"Tut, tut!" said Vardiello. "Let me alone. I know what I'm about, never fear." So, taking the cloth, he went his way through the city of Naples, crying, "Cloth for sale! Fine cloth for sale!"
But whenever anyone asked him, "What kind of cloth have you there?" he replied, "You are no customer

for me. You are a man of too many words." And when one asked him the price, he called him a chatterbox who deafened him with his noise. At length he spied, in the courtyard of a deserted house, a plaster statue; and being tired out with wandering, he sat himself down there on a bench. But astonished at not seeing any signs of life about the house, he said to the statue, "Tell me, comrade, does no one live here?" As the statue gave no answer, Vardiello thought to himself, "Now have I found a man of few words." So addressing the statue again, he said, "Friend, will you buy my cloth ? I'll sell it to you cheap." And seeing that the statue still was dumb, he exclaimed, "Faith! now I've found my man at last. There, take the cloth; and give me what you will. To-morrow I'll come back for the money."
So saying, he left the cloth where he had been sitting, and the first mother's son that passed that way found the prize and carried it off.
When Vardiello returned home without the cloth, and

told his mother all that had happened, she was in despair, and cried out, "When will you put that headpiece of yours in order? See what tricks you have played me! But I am myself to blame for being too tender-hearted, instead of having given you a good beating long ago. One day there will be a long reckoning, my lad!"
"Softly, mother!" replied her son. "Matters are not so bad as they seem. Do you think I am a fool, and don't know what I am about? Wait till to-morrow and you

shall see whether I know how to fit a handle to a shovel."
Next morning Vardiello returned to the courtyard where the statue stood, and said, "Good day, friend! Can you give me those few pence you owe me? Quick, now, and pay me for my cloth." But when the statue still remained speechless, he took up a stone and hurled it at its breast. Some pieces of the statue falling off, he discovered in the hollow inside a pot full of golden crowns. Taking it in both his hands, off he ran home, head over heels as fast as he could scamper, crying, Mother! mother! See here what a lot of red lupins I've got! Oh, but so many, so many!"

His mother, seeing all the money, and knowing very well that her son could not hold his tongue about it, told him to wait at the door until the man with the milk came past, as she wanted to buy a pennyworth. So Vardiello went and sat down by the door; and his mother showered down on him from the window above raisins and dried figs for ever so long. Whereupon Vardiello, picking them up as fast as he could, cried out, "Mother! mother! Bring out some baskets! Give me some bowls ! Here, quick with the tubs and buckets! If it goes on raining like this we'll be rich indeed." Now, he was a great glutton; and when he had eaten his fill he went to sleep.
It happened one day that two countrymen fell out, and went to law about a gold crown-piece which they

had found on the ground. And Vardiello, passing by while they were quarrelling, said, "What asses you are to fight over a gold lupin! For my part I think nothing of it. I found a whole potful of them." Hearing this they hauled Vardiello before the Judge to repeat what he had said. The Judge asked him how, when, and where he had found the crowns. And the boy replied, "I found them in a palace, inside a dumb man, the day it rained raisins and dried figs." The Judge stared in amazement; but quickly seeing he had to do with a

booby, he dismissed him without more ado, and without even suspecting by what cunning his mother had caused him to make this foolish reply.
So the treasure remained in the hands of Grannonia.

THE SEVEN DOVES

THERE was once in the county of Arzano a good woman to whom every year gave a son, till at length there were seven of them, and they looked like the seven reeds of a Pan pipe. Now, one day they said to Jannetella, their mother, "Hark ye, mother, if, after so many sons, you do not this time have a daughter, we are resolved to leave home, and go wandering through the world like the sons of the blackbirds."
When their mother heard this, she prayed she might not lose seven such jewels as they were. But the sons said to Jannetella, "We will retire to the top of yonder hill opposite. If Heaven sends you another son, put an inkstand and a pen up at the window; but if you have a little girl, put up a spoon and a distaff. For if we see the signal of a daughter, we shall return home and spend the rest of our lives under your wing; but if we see the signal of a son, then forget us, for you may know that we have taken ourselves off."
Soon after the seven sons had left home a pretty little daughter was born to Jannetella. But when she told the nurse to make the signal to the brothers, the woman was so confused that she put up the inkstand and the pen instead. As soon as the seven brothers saw this

signal they set off, and walked on and on till, at the end of three years, they came to a wood, where the trees were dancing to the music of a river as it rippled over the stones. In this wood was the house of an Ogre.
Now, the Ogre had been blinded, while he lay asleep, by a woman; and ever after he had been such an enemy to womankind that he devoured all whom he could catch.
When the youths arrived at the Ogre's house, tired out with walking, and faint with hunger, they begged him for pity's sake to give them a morsel of bread. The Ogre replied that, if they would serve him, he would give them food. They would have nothing else to do but watch over his safety, each in turn for a day. The youths, upon hearing this, thought they had found mother and father. So they consented, and remained in the service of the Ogre, who having gotten their names by heart, called now Jangrazio, now Chekko, now Pascalé, now Nucchio, now Poné, now Pezzillo, and now Carca, for so were the brothers named. He gave up to them the lower part of the house, and allowed them enough to live upon.
Meanwhile their sister had grown up; and hearing

that her seven brothers, owing to the mistake of the nurse, had set out to walk through the world, and that no tidings of them had ever been received, she took it into her head to go in search of them. And she begged and prayed her mother so long, that at last Jannetella gave her leave to go, and dressed her like a pilgrim.

The maiden walked and walked, asking at every place

she came to whether anyone had seen seven brothers. And thus she journeyed on, until at length she got news of them at an inn. Having inquired the way to the wood, one morning she arrived at the Ogre's house, where she made herself known to her brothers and was received by them with great joy. After caressing her a thousand times, they told her to remain quiet in their quarter of the house, that the Ogre might not see her, at the same time bidding her give a portion of whatever she had to eat to a cat which lived there, or otherwise the creature would do her harm. Channa-for so the sister was called -took heed to this advice, and shared everything with the cat, like a good comrade, always cutting fairly; and saying, "This for me-this for thee-this for the daughter of the King!" giving the cat a share to the very last morsel.

Now, it happened one day that the brothers, going to hunt for the Ogre, left Channa a little basket of peas to cook; and as she was shelling them, she found among them a hazel nut. As ill luck would have it, she forgot to give half to the cat, but ate up the nut herself; and the latter, out of spite, ran to the hearth and raked out the fire. Channa, seeing this, left the room, against the command of her brothers, and going into the Ogre's chamber, begged him for a little hot coals. Then the Ogre, hearing a woman's voice, said, "Welcome, madam! Just you wait a while!" And he fell to sharpening his tusks with a whetstone. But Channa, who saw that she

had made a mistake, seizing a lighted stick, ran to her chamber with it. Then bolting the door inside, she placed against it stools, bedstead, tables, stones, in fact every-thing she could find.

As soon as the Ogre had put an edge to his teeth he ran to her room, and finding the door fastened, he fell to kicking it to break it open. The seven brothers came home just as he was making all this noise and disturbance, and the Ogre immediately accused them of treachery. Things might have gone badly but for the cleverness of the eldest, Jangrazio. "As she has fortified herself inside," he said, "come with me, and I will take you to a place where

we can seize her without her being able to defend herself."
Then they led the Ogre by the hand, and led him to a deep, deep pit, where giving him a push, they sent him headlong to the bottom; and taking a shovel, which they found on the ground, they covered him with earth. Then they bade their sister unfasten the door, and they rated her soundly for the fault she had committed, and the danger in which she had placed herself; telling her to be more careful in future, and to beware of plucking grass upon the spot where the Ogre was buried, or they would be turned into seven doves.
"Heaven keep me from bringing such a misfortune upon you!" replied Channa. So taking possession of all the Ogre's goods and chattels, and making themselves masters of the whole house, they lived there merrily enough, waiting until winter should pass away.

Now it happened one day, when the brothers were gone to the mountains to get firewood, that a poor pilgrim came to the Ogre's wood, and made faces at an ape that was perched up in a pine tree; whereupon the ape threw down one of the fir-apples from the tree upon the man's pate, which made such a terrible bump that the poor fellow set up a loud cry. Channa, hearing the noise, went out, and taking pity on his disaster, she quickly plucked a sprig of rosemary from a tuft which grew upon the Ogre's grave; then she made him a plaster of it with bread and salt, and after giving the man some breakfast she sent him away.
Whilst Channa was laying the cloth, and expecting her brothers, lo! she saw seven doves come flying, who said to her, "Ah! better that your hand had been cut off ere it plucked that accursed rosemary and brought such a calamity upon us! Behold us turned to birds, a prey to the talons of kites, hawks and falcons! behold us made companions of water-hens, snipes, goldfinches, wood-peckers, jays, owls, magpies, jackdaws, rooks, starlings, woodcocks, cocks, hens and chickens, turkey-cocks, black-birds, thrushes, chaffinches, tomtits, jenny-wrens, lap-wings, linnets, greenfinches, crossbills, flycatchers, larks, plovers, kingfishers, wagtails, redbreasts, redfinches, sparrows, ducks, fieldfares, wood-pigeons and bullfinches! A rare thing you have done! and now we may return to our country to find nets laid and twigs limed for us! To heal the head of a pilgrim, you have broken the heads

of seven brothers; nor is there any help for our misfortune, unless you find the Mother of Time, who will tell you the way to get us out of our trouble."
Channa, in despair at the fault she had committed,

begged pardon of her brothers, and offered to go round the world until she should find the dwelling of the old woman. Then praying them not to stir from the house until she returned, lest any ill should betide them, she set out, and journeyed on and on without ever tiring. At last she came to the seashore, where the waves were banging against the rocks. Here she saw a huge whale, who said to her, "My pretty maiden, what go you seeking?" And she replied, "I am seeking the dwelling of the Mother of Time." "Hear then what you must do," said the whale. "Go straight along the shore, and on coming to the first river, follow it up to its source, and you will meet with some one who will show you the way. But do me one kindness-When you find the old woman, beg her to be so good as to tell me how I may swim about safely, without so often knocking upon the rocks and being thrown up on the sands."

"Trust to me," said Channa. Then thanking the whale, she set off walking along the shore; and after a long journey she came to the river where it was entering the sea. Taking the way that led up to its source, she reached a beautiful open country, where the meadows were starred with flowers; and there she met a mouse who said to her, "Whither are you going thus alone, my

pretty girl?" And Channa replied, "I am seeking the Mother of Time."

"You have a long way to go," said the mouse; "but do not lose heart-everything has an end. Walk on therefore towards yon mountain, and you will soon have more news of what you are seeking. But do me one favour-When you arrive at the house you wish to find, ask the old woman to tell you what we can do to get rid of the tyranny of the cats. Then command me, and I am your slave."

Channa, after promising to do the mouse this kindness, set off towards the mountains. Having come to them at length, she sat down quite tired out upon a stone; and there she saw an army of ants carrying a large store of grain. One of them, turning to Channa, said, "Who are you, and whither are you going?" And Channa, who was courteous to every one, said to her, " I am an unhappy girl, who, for a matter that concerns me, am seeking the dwelling of the Mother of Time."

"Go on farther," replied the ant, "and where these mountains open into a large plain you will obtain more news. But do me a great favour-get the secret from the old woman of how ants can live a little longer; for it seems to me a folly to be heaping up such a large store of food for so short a life."

"Be at ease," said Channa; "I will return the kindness you have shown me."

Then she passed the mountains and arrived at a wide

plain; and proceeding a little way over it, she came to a large oak tree. Its fruit tasted like sweetmeats to the maiden, who was satisfied with little. Then the oak, making lips of its bark and a tongue of its pith, said to Channa, "Whither are you going so sad, my little daughter? Come and rest under my shade." Channa thanked him much, but excused herself, saying that she was going in haste to find the Mother of Time. And when the oak heard this he replied, "You are not far from her dwelling; for before you have gone another day's journey you will see upon a mountain a house, in which you will find her whom you seek. But if you have as much kindness as beauty, I prithee learn for me what I can do to regain my lost honour; for instead of being food for great men I am now only made the food of hogs." "Leave that to me," replied Channa. "I will take care to serve you." So saying, she departed; and walking on and on without ever resting, she came at length to the foot of a mountain which was poking its head up into the face of the clouds. There she found an old man, who, wearied and wayworn, had lain down upon some hay; and as soon as he saw Channa he knew her at once, for he was the pilgrim whose head she had cured. When he heard what she was seeking, he said he could at last return some of her kindness by putting her on the right road. "Now, my pretty, innocent child, listen to me. You must know that on the top of this mountain you will find a ruined house, which was built long ago, time out of mind.

The walls are cracked, the foundations crumbling away, the doors worm-eaten, the furniture all worn out, and in short everything is gone to wrack and ruin. On one side are seen shattered columns, on another broken statues, and nothing is left in a good state except a coat-of-arms over the door, quartered, on which you will see a serpent biting its tail, a stag, a raven, and a phenix. When you enter, you will see on the ground files, saws, scythes, sickles, pruning-hooks, and hundreds and hundreds of vessels full of ashes, with names written on them, like gallipots in an apothecary's shop; and there may be read Corinth, Carthage, Troy, and a thousand other cities, the ashes of which Time preserves as trophies of his conquests. "When you come near the house, hide yourself until Time goes out; and as soon as he has gone forth, enter, and you will find an old, old woman, with a beard that touches the ground and a hump reaching to the sky: her hair, like the tail of a dapple-grey horse, covers her heels; her face is a mass of tight wrinkles. The old

woman is seated upon a clock, which is fastened to a wall; and her eyebrows are so large that they overshadow her eyes, so that she will not be able to see you. As soon as you enter, quickly take the weights off the clock. Then call the old woman, and beg her to answer your questions; whereupon she will instantly command her son to eat you up. But the clock having lost its weights, her son cannot move, and she will therefore be obliged to tell you what you wish. But do not trust any oath she may

make, unless she swears by the wings of her son. If she does so, trust her; do what she tells you, and you will be content."
Channa then climbed the mountain till she was quite out of breath, and waited till Time came out. He was an old man with a long, long beard, who wore a very old cloak covered with slips of paper, on which were written the names of various people. He had large wings, and he ran so fast that he was out of sight in an instant. When Channa entered the house of the old mother, she started with fright at the sight of her; and instantly seizing the weights of the clock, she told what she wanted to the old woman, who setting up a loud cry, called to her son. But Channa said to her, "You may butt your head against the wall as long as you like, you will not see your son whilst I hold these clock-weights."
Thereupon the old woman, seeing herself foiled, began to coax Channa, saying, "Let go of them, my dear, and do not stop my son's course; for no man living has ever done that. Let go of them, and may Heaven preserve you! for I promise you by the aquafortis of my son, with which he corrodes everything, that I will do you no harm."
"That's time lost," answered Channa; "you must say something better if you would have me quit my hold."
"I swear to you by those teeth which gnaw all mortal things, that I will tell you all you desire."

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"That is nothing," answered Channa; "for I know you are deceiving me."
"Well, then," said the old woman, "I swear to you

by those wings which fly over all, that I will give you more pleasure than you imagine."
Thereupon Channa, letting go the weights, kissed the old woman's hand, which had a mouldy smell. And the old woman, seeing the courtesy of the damsel, said to her, "Hide yourself behind this door, and when Time comes home I will make him tell me all you wish to know. And as soon as he goes out again for he never stays quiet in one place you can depart. But do not let yourself be heard or seen, for he is such a glutton that he does not spare even his own children; and when all fails, he devours himself, and then springs up anew."
Channa did as the old woman told her, and lo! soon after, Time came flying quick, quick, high and light, and having gnawed whatever came to hand, down to the very mouldiness upon the walls, he was about to depart, when his mother told him all she had heard from Channa, beseeching him to answer exactly all her questions. After a thousand entreaties her son replied, "To the tree may be answered, that it can never be prized by men so long as it keeps treasures buried under its roots :-to the mice, that they will never be safe from the cat unless they tie a bell to her leg, to tell them when she is coming :-to the ants, that they will live a hundred years, if they can dispense with flying; for when the ant is going to die she

puts on wings:-to the whale, that it should be of good cheer, and make friends with the sea-mouse, who will serve him as a guide, so that he will never go astray :- and to the doves, that when they fly and alight on the column of riches, they will return to their former shape."
So saying, Time set out to run his accustomed race; and Channa, taking leave of the old woman, descended the mountain just at the very time that the seven doves who had followed their sister's footsteps, arrived there. Wearied with flying so far, they stopped to rest upon the horn of a dead ox; and no sooner had they alighted than they were changed into handsome youths again.
But while they were marvelling at this, they understood that the horn, as the symbol of plenty, was the column of wealth of which Time had spoken. Then embracing their sister with great joy, they all set out on the same road by which Channa had come. And when they came to the oak tree, and told it what Channa had heard from Time, the tree begged them to take away the treasure from its roots, since it was the cause why its acorns had lost their reputation. Thereupon the seven brothers, taking a spade which they found in the garden, dug and dug, until they came to a great heap of gold money, which they divided into eight parts, and shared between themselves and their sister. But being wearied with the journey and the load, they laid themselves down to sleep

under a hedge. Presently a band of robbers coming by, and seeing the poor fellows asleep, with their heads upon
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the bundles of dollars, bound them hand and foot to some trees, and took away the money, leaving them to bewail not only their wealth, which had slipped through their fingers as soon as found, but their life; for being without hope of succour, they were in peril of either soon dying of starvation or allaying the hunger of some wild beast.
As they were lamenting their unhappy lot, up came the mouse, who, as soon as she heard the reply which Time had given, in return for the good service, nibbled the cords with which they were bound and set them free. And having gone a little way farther, they met on the road the ant, who, when she heard the advice of Time, asked Channa what was the matter, that she was so pale-faced and cast down. And when Channa told her their misfortune, and the trick which the robbers had played them, the ant replied, "Be quiet. I can now requite the kindness you have done me. You must know, that whilst I was carrying a load of grain underground I saw a place where these dogs of assassins hide their plunder; they have made some holes under an old building, in which they shut up all the things they have stolen; they are just now gone out for some new robbery, and I will go with you and show you the place, so that you may recover your money."
So saying, she took the way towards some tumble-down houses, and showed the seven brothers the mouth of a pit; whereupon Jangrazio, who was bolder than
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the rest, entered it and found there all the money of which they had been robbed. Taking it with them, they set out, and walked towards the seashore, where they found the whale, and told him the good advice which Time had sent him. And whilst they stood talking of all that had befallen them, they saw the robbers suddenly appear, armed to the teeth, who had followed in their footsteps. "Alas! alas!" they cried. "We are now wholly lost." "Fear not," replied the whale, "for I can save you, and will thus requite the good service you have done me. So get upon my back, and I will quickly carry you to a place of safety."
Channa and her brothers, seeing the foe at their heels, and the water up to their throat, climbed upon the whale, who keeping far off from the rocks, carried them to within sight of Naples. There at the Salt-rock he left them; and they got put on shore by the first fishing-boat that

passed. Thereupon they returned to their own country, safe and sound and rich, to the great joy and consolation of their father and mother; and, thanks to the goodness of Channa, they enjoyed a happy life, verifying the old saying, "Do good whenever you can, and forget it."

TI-TIRITI-TI

Once upon a time there was a little old peasant who had but one small field no bigger than the palm of your hand, and all full of stones and briars. He had set up a hay-rick in it, and there he lived, digging, sowing, and weeding, from year's end to year's end, and farming it as best he could.

When it was time to rest he would pull a whistle from his pocket, and "Ti-tiriti-ti" went the tune, always the same one; then he would go to work again.

But all this time the poor little bit of a field, full of stones and briars, yielded him more profits than a farm. When his neighbours gathered in twenty times what they had sown, he was sure to have a hundredfold, to say the least.

Some of his neighbours were full of spite and envy. At one time not one of them would have taken that bit of ground, even as a gift; and now that he had it, there was nothing they would not have done to get it away from him.

"I say, neighbour, don't you want to get rid of that heap of stones ?
I know someone who would pay
you three times its value."
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But the peasant would answer:

"These stones are all my own,
Not even the King on his throne
Can make me give them away!"

And another would say: "Neighbour, don't you want to get rid of these stones? I know somebody who would be glad to pay you three times their value."

But the answer was always:

"These stones are all my own,
Not even the King on his throne
Can make me give them away!"

Now, it once happened that the King passed that way, accompanied by his Ministers. When he saw the little field (which looked more like a garden, so green and flourishing was its crop, while the corn in the fields round about was so poor and faded it looked like the bristles of an old brush), he stopped, struck with amazement, and said to his Ministers, "What a fine crop of corn! I would

willingly buy that field."
"May it please your Majesty, but it is not for sale.
It belongs to a very odd sort of man, who answers all
offers with these words:
"These stones are all my own,
Not even the King on his throne
Can make me give them away!"
"Oh, I should like to see if he'll answer me that way!"
said the King; and he ordered the peasant to be called
to him.
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"Is it true that you would not give up your field even
to the King?”
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His Majesty has so many fields, what good would
my poor heap of stones do him?"
"But supposing he wanted them...?..
"Supposing he wanted them?
Ah!
...
"These stones are all my own,
Not even the King on his throne
Can make me give them away!"
The King made believe to have taken no offence at
this; but during the night he sent a hundred guardsmen
to trample down the crop without making any noise, so as
not to leave so much as one blade of grass standing up-
right. You may think what a sight met the peasant's
eyes the next morning when he came out from his hay-
rick. Everything destroyed! And all his kind neigh-
bours standing there staring over the hedge with the
greatest satisfaction, though they tried to look as if they
were sorry.
"Ah, neighbour, neighbour!" said they. "If you
had but sold your heap of stones in time, this misfortune
would not have befallen you!"
But to all this he answered not a word, just as though
they had not been speaking to him. When they had all
taken themselves off about their business, he pulled his
whistle out of his pocket, and "Ti-tiriti-ti," the corn
began to rise up again; and "Ti-tiriti-ti," it all stood
up quite straight, as if nothing had happened to it.
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The King, quite sure of his affair, sent for the peasant,
and began, "I hear there is some one who bears you a
grudge, my man, and that last night your crop of corn
was half-destroyed. Now, sell me that heap of stones of
yours; when the folk know they are mine they'll keep at a
respectful distance."
"Please your Majesty, what has been told you is not

true; my crop is finer than ever."
The King bit his lips. So, then, his orders had not been obeyed! And he blamed the Ministers. But when they told him that the poor guardsmen could not even move, they had stamped so hard all night, his Majesty was astounded.
"Then to-night turn all my flocks into the field!"
Next morning, when the peasant came out from his hayrick, what a sight he beheld! The ground was perfectly stripped and as smooth as satin !
And his good neighbours, as usual, were saying:
"Ah, neighbour, neighbour! If you had but taken advice, and sold that heap of stones there, this new misfortune would not have fallen upon you!"
But he, without a word, went shuffling about as if they had not been speaking to him.
When at last they had all gone about their business, out he pulled his whistle, and "Ti-tiriti-ti," the corn began to sprout up again; and "Ti-tiriti-ti," the corn was waving high and green, as if nothing had ever happened to it.

This time the King was quite sure he had won the day. He wanted to see that man! Just think what a face he would make!
So no sooner did the peasant come into his presence than he said, "There really must be some one who bears you a grudge, my poor fellow. I hear that last night your crop of corn was again quite destroyed. Come now! you sell me that heap of stones of yours; when the people know they belong to me, they'll look at them from a respectful distance."
"But, please your Majesty, my crop is not destroyed. It is finer than ever!"
The King bit his lips for spite. Then his orders had not been obeyed this time either !
And he found fault with his Ministers. But the Ministers told him that the flocks had eaten so much during the night that the sheep were all swollen to bursting, and that half of them had already died of repletion!
The King was more astonished than ever.
"There is some mystery in all this. You must find it out. I give you three days' time!"
Now, there was no joking with his Majesty. The Ministers set to scratching their bald heads, in hopes of getting some idea out of them, and they thought and thought!...
At last one proposed to go in the night-time, and hide behind that accursed peasant's hayrick till daybreak. Who could know what might happen? That was a good idea! So they went; and as there were several

openings in the rick, they set to peeping in through them.
All night the King was not able to close an eye for thinking of what had happened, and next morning, first thing, he had his Ministers called to him.
"Oh, please your Majesty! What a sight we have seen! What a sight we have seen!"
"Whatever have you seen then? You look mighty well pleased, all of you."
"Well, that peasant has a whistle, and the moment he begins to play on it, the inside of his hayrick changes into a sumptuous palace."
"And then?"
"And then out comes a young girl, more lovely than sunlight; and he plays 'Ti-tiriti-ti,' and makes her dance to his playing. After that he says to her:
""Fair daughter, if the King would win thy hand,
Seven years in sun and rain then must he stand.
If seven years in sun and rain he will not bide,
Then, daughter, thou canst never be his bride!'"
"And then?"
"And then he began playing again, and in a twinkling the splendid palace once more became a hayrick."
"I'll give it to him with his sun and rain! But let us first see this miracle of beauty!"
And the next night he went, accompanied by his Ministers. And behold! the peasant pulled out his whistle from his pocket; and "Ti-tiriti-ti," in a trice the

haystack was changed into a royal dwelling; and, "Ti-tiriti-ti," the lovely maiden appeared and began to dance. At that sight the King went clean out of his wits. Oh, what a beauty she is! She shall be mine! She shall be mine!" And without losing any time he began knocking at the entrance.
The peasant stopped playing; and all at once the royal palace became a hayrick again; but there was no sign of its opening; and the King, though burning with impatience, was forced to go home as he had come. Before dawn, however, he sent a messenger in great haste. The King wanted to see the peasant immediately.
The peasant came and presented himself. What did his Majesty command of him ?
"My will is that you give me your daughter for my bride. She shall be made Queen, and you Lord Chamberlain."
"Please your Majesty, but there is a condition to fulfil :

"Whoe'er would win my daughter's hand
Seven years in sun and rain must stand.
If seven years he stand not in sun and in rain,
Whoever he be, he shall woo her in vain."
The King would have rarely liked to give him such sun and rain as he would not forget in a hurry. But then there was the maiden at stake, and for love of her he would do anything.

So he shrugged his shoulders, and replied:
"Then I shall wait seven years in sun and rain."
He placed the government of his kingdom in the hands of the Ministers for all the time he would be absent, and went to live with the old peasant, exposed all day to the scorching sun, or the pouring rain, even when it came down in bucketfuls.
Poor King! after a short time no one would have been able to recognise him; his skin was burnt to such a degree that he seemed made of terra-cotta. But he had one compensation, however. Every now and again, when it was night, the peasant would pull out his whistle, and before beginning his tune would say to him, "Your Majesty must remember well that
"Who touches rends,
Who speaks offends!"
And then "Ti-tiriti-ti," in less time than I tell you the hayrick became a sumptuous palace, and "Ti-tiriti-ti," the maiden appeared, more beautiful than the sun, moon and stars!
All the time she danced the King simply devoured her with his eyes. He had to make a great effort not to rush up to her, fold her in his arms, and say, "You shall be my Queen!" His great love for her, and the fear of losing her, alone kept him back.
Six years, six months, and six days had already flown. The King rubbed his hands for joy.

Soon, very soon, that maiden, more beautiful than the sun, moon and stars, would become his bride, and he would return to his Royal Palace, a King as before, only much, much happier than ever he had been!
But bad luck would have it that one night the peasant took out his whistle as usual and began playing without reminding him, "Your Majesty,
"Who touches rends,
Who speaks offends!"
When he saw her the King could no longer restrain himself, and running up to the fair maiden, embraced her, crying, "You shall be my Queen! You shall be my Queen!"

Like a flash of lightning the maiden was turned into a knotty trunk of a tree!
"Yet I had warned your Majesty!" said the peasant,
"Who touches rends,
Who speaks offends!"
The King seemed turned to stone with grief and amaze-ment. Must he begin all over again? Yes, he must begin all over again. Well, over again he began. He roasted himself in the sun.
"Sun, fair sun above,
I suffer here for love!"
He let himself be drenched by the rain.

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WHO SPEAKS OFFENDS
WHO TOVCHES RENDS

Rain, good, gentle rain,
For the maid I suffer pain."
And when the peasant would pull his whistle out of his pocket, and, " Ti-tiriti-ti," the maiden appeared and began to dance, he devoured her with his eyes from a corner, but as quiet and still as oil, for he did not feel inclined to begin all over again another time. And again six years six months, and six days had passed away, and the King began to rub his hands for joy.
But misfortune would have it that one night, when the maiden was dancing to the sound of the peasant's whistle as she had never danced before, with such grace! such elegance! the King could stand it no longer, and rushing up to her, embraced her, crying, "Ah, my Queen! my Queen!"
And what should he find in his arms again but the knotty trunk of a tree!
"Ah, your Majesty! Your Majesty!" said the old peasant, " yet I had told you,

"Who touches rends,
Who speaks offends!"
The wretched King stood stock-still in dismay and disappointment. "Must I begin all over again?"
"Yes, you must begin all over again!"
And he began again.
"Sun, fair sun above,
I suffer here for love.

Rain, good, gentle rain,
For the maid I suffer pain!"

This time, however, he was more on his guard, and when at last the seven years appointed had passed, he won the maiden more beautiful than sunlight. He could hardly believe it was true.

But what had happened in the meanwhile ? Well, his Ministers and subjects, thinking he had gone mad, had forgotten all about him, and had conferred the crown, some years before, on one of his relations. So when the King presented himself at his Palace with his fair bride leaning on his arm, the soldiers who stood at the gate as sentinels, said, "You can't pass here, sir! You can't pass here!"

"I am the King! call down my Ministers!"

But the old ones he had known were all dead, and those of the new King let him talk till he was tired.

He then turned to his people.

"How is this? Do you not recognise your King?"

The people very civilly laughed in his face, but otherwise paid him not the slightest attention. Quite in despair he went back to the peasant's little field, where the hay-rick once stood; but to his surprise he saw a splendid edifice worthy of being a king's palace. He went up-stairs, but instead of the peasant there came forward to meet him a handsome old man with a flowing white beard. It was no other than the great Magician Sabino !

"Don't lose heart!" he said, and taking the King by

the hand he led him into a splendid hall where stood a large basin full of clear water. The Magician, seizing the basin, poured its contents on his head, and the King, from being a rather elderly-looking man, once more became a blooming youth, as when he was but twenty years of age.

Then the magician said to him: "Look out of the window and play on this whistle, and you shall see!"

And so the King did, playing "Ti-tiriti-ti," and behold a large army of magnificent men clad in full armour, as compact in their ranks as a London fog, came streaming over the hills and down into the valley.

War was declared, and while the soldiers fought, he stood on the top of a rising ground and played away, "Ti-tiriti-ti," never stopping till the battle was won.

Then he returned to his Royal Palace, conquering and triumphant. He forgave everybody, and to cele-brate his wedding with the fair maid he loved so well, gave his people a whole month of feasting and merry-making.

And soon was given to him a son and heir,
And they all lived happily without a care.

It was at the time of the year when the earth was newly

decked with her summer's livery that the noble champion, St. Anthony of Italy, arrived in Thracia, where he spent his seven years' travel to the honour of his country, the glory of God, and to his own lasting renown. For after he had wandered through woods and wildernesses, by hills and dales, by caves and dens, and through unknown passages, he arrived at last upon the top of a high mountain, whereon stood a wonderfully strong castle, which was kept by the most mighty giant, whose force all Thrace could not overcome, nor even attempt to withstand.

The giant's name was Blanderon; his castle of the purest marble, with gates of brass. Over the principal entrance was an inscription telling how Blanderon kept in his tower seven daughters of the Thracian king, that the imprisoned damsels were doomed to sing the monster to sleep every night; that thousands of knights had died in their attempts to rescue the maidens, yet that they still hoped for a victorious champion, for whom they would pray evermore.

After St. Anthony had read this, thirst of honour so emboldened his mind that he vowed either to free these

ladies, or die with honour by the fury of the giant. Therefore, going to the castle gate, he struck so vehemently thereon with the pommel of his sword, that it sounded like a thunderclap. Whereat Blanderon suddenly started up, having been fast asleep by a fountain-side, and came pacing forth of the gate, with an oak tree over his shoulder, which, at the sight of the Italian champion, he flourished about his head, as though it had been a little battle-axe.

Addressing the noble champion, he said, "What fury hath incensed thy mind thus to venture thy feeble force against the violence of my strong arm ? I tell thee, hadst thou the strength of Hercules, thou wert all too weak to encounter the mighty giant Blanderon. Thy strength I esteem as a puff of wind, and thy strokes as a few drops of water. Therefore betake thee to thy weapon, which I compare to a bulrush; for on this ground will I measure out thy grave."

Thus boasted the vain-glorious giant. During which time the valiant champion had alighted from his horse. Then, after he had made his humble supplication to Heaven for good fortune, he approached within the giant's reach, who with his great oak dealt towards him such vehement blows that they seemed to shake the earth, and to rattle against the wall of the castle like thunder-claps. And had not the Knight continually skipped from the fury of his blows, he had soon been killed, for every stroke the giant gave, the root of the oak entered at least two

or three inches into the ground. But the worthy champion was wise enough not to spend his full force till the giant grew breathless and unable to lift the oak above his head. Shortly the heat of the sun became so intolerable that the sweat from the giant's blows ran into his eyes, and by reason he was so extremely fat, he could not see to combat any longer, and would have run back again into his castle, but that the Italian champion, with a bold courage, assailed him so fiercely that he was forced to let his oak fall and stand gasping for breath. But the noble Knight redoubled his blows, which fell on the giant's armour like a storm of hail, whereby at last Blanderon was compelled to ask the champion's mercy. But St. Anthony saw that now or never was the time to obtain the honour of the day, and therefore rested not his weary arm till the giant was forced to bid the world farewell, and to yield his castle to the most renowned conqueror, St. Anthony of Italy.

But by the time the long and dangerous encounter had finished, and the giant Blanderon's head was severed from his body, the sun had mounted to the highest part of the heavens. The champion's armour scalded him so much that he unbraced his corselet, laid aside his burgonet, and cast his body upon the cold earth. But the vapours from the chilly ground struck presently to his heart; and his body lay exposed, without sense or moving, to the mercy of pale death, for the space of an hour.

After this time fair Rosalinde, one of the daughters of

the Thracian king, a prisoner in the castle, by chance looked over the walls, and espied the headless body of the giant, under whose subjection she had continued for seven years, and by him a Knight unarmed, as she thought, panting for breath. She at once descended the walls of the castle, and ran with speed to the adventurous champion, whom she found to all appearance dead. But feeling as yet warm blood in every member, she returned with all haste to the castle, and fetched a box of precious balm, which the giant was wont to pour into his wounds after his encounter with any knight. With this balm the courteous lady chafed every part of the breathless champion's body; one time washing his stiff limbs with her salt tears, another time drying them with tresses of her golden hair, which hung dangling in the wind. But yet no sign of life could she see in the Knight, which caused her to despair of his recovery.

Then, considering he had lost his life for her sake, she made up her mind to bear him company in death, with her own hands to finish her days, and die upon his breast. Just as she had unsheathed the champion's sword, and had pointed it against her bosom, she heard the distressed

Knight give a terrible groan, whereat she stayed her hand. For by this time the balm had recovered him, and presently he raised up his stiff limbs from the cold earth. For a time he gazed up and down the mountain, until at last, having recovered his senses, he espied the Thracian damsel standing by, unable to speak one word for joy.

After a space he revealed to her the manner of his victory; she to him the cause of his recovery, and her intended death. Whereupon, after many kind salutations, she courteously took him by the hand, and led him into the castle, where for that night she lodged his weary limbs on an easy bed stuffed with turtle-feathers and softest thistle-down.
The Knight slept soundly after his dangerous battle till the morning. Then rising from his bed, he attired himself, not in his armour, but in purple garments. The lady Rosalinde had busied herself in preparing his repast, and when he had refreshed himself with a dainty banquet, he stripped the giant Blanderon of his iron furniture, and left his naked body upon a craggy rock, to be devoured by hungry ravens; after which the Thracian virgin discovered all the castle to the champion. First she led him to a leaden tower, where hung a hundred corselets, with other martial furniture, the spoils of such knights as had been violently slain. After that she brought him to a stable, wherein stood a hundred pampered steeds. Against it was placed the giant's own lodging. His bed was of iron, corded with mighty bars of steel; the tester, or covering, of carved brass; and the curtains were of leaves of gold. After this she led him to a broad pond of water, more clear than quicksilver, whereon swam six milk-white swans, with circlets of gold about their necks.
"Oh, here," said the Thracian lady, "begins the depth

of all my grief! These swans are my sisters. Daughters are we of the King of Thrace; and the beginning of our imprisonment began in this unfortunate manner.
"The King, my father, ordained a solemn hunting to be held through the land, at which we seven sisters were present. In the middle of our sports, when the lords and barons of Thracia were in chase after a mighty lioness, the heavens suddenly began to lower; a darkness overspread the face of the earth; and there arose such a storm of lightning and thunder, as though heaven and earth had met together. Our lordly troops of knights and barons were separated, and we poor ladies forced to seek for shelter at the bottom of this high mountain. When the cruel giant Blanderon espied us, as he walked

upon his battlements, he suddenly descended the mountain, and fetched us all under his arm up into the castle. For my six sisters, he turned their comely bodies into the shape of milk-white swans; but kept me to lull him to sleep with sweet music." The fair Rosalinde could tell no more for weeping, whereat the Knight embraced and thus began to comfort her.

"Most dear and kind lady, think first that the heavens have preserved thee from the giant's rage; then thou hast been delivered by my means from servitude, and lastly, remaining as thou dost in thy natural shape, thou mayst live to be the means of thy sisters' transformation. Dry then thine eyes, I pray thee."

After the woeful Thracian lady was comforted by the

noble Christian champion, they resolved to travel to her father's Court, there to relate what happened to her sisters in the castle, likewise the overcoming of the giant, and her own safe delivery by the prowess of the Christian Knight. So, taking the keys of the castle, which were of a wonderful weight, they locked up the gates, and paced hand-in-hand down the steep mountain till they approached the Thracian Court, which was distant about ten miles. Coming to her father's castle, they heard a solemn sound of bells ringing a funeral knell. The cause of this they demanded of the porter, who answered them :

"Fair lady and most renowned knight, the cause of this ringing is for the loss of the King's seven daughters. The number of the bells are seven, called after the names of the seven princesses. Never have they ceased their doleful melody since the departure of the unhappy ladies, nor ever will until news be heard of their safe return."

"Then now their task is ended," said Rosalinde, "for we bring news of the seven princesses' abode."

At these words the porter ran in all haste to the steeple, and caused the bells to cease, whereat the King of Thracia, hearing the bells cease their wonted sound, suddenly started up, and like a man amazed ran to the Palace gate, where he found his daughter Rosalinde, in company of a strange Knight. His joy was so excessive that he swooned on his daughter's bosom. Then recovering, he brought them into his princely hall, and gave them honourable

entertainment in the presence of the whole Court. But their joy was presently damped by Rosalinde's tale of her sisters. The good old King, when he heard how his daughters lived in the shape of milk-white swans, rent his locks of silver hair, tore his rich garments and clad his

aged limbs in a dismal black mantle. He also commanded that his champions should wear, instead of glittering armour, raiment blacker than darkest night, and all the courtly ladies and Thracian maidens sad and heavy-coloured ornaments. Next morning, with a melancholy train, he set out on a pilgrimage to the giant's castle, there to mourn over the fate of his unhappy daughters.

The Italian champion and Rosalinde remained behind in the royal castle. But one day the Knight said to her, "My most devoted lady and mistress, for thy sake I'll stand as champion against all comers, but live as a carpet Knight I will not. Though I can tune a lute in a Princess's chamber, I can sound a fierce alarm in the field. Honour calls me forth, dear Rosalinde, and Fame intends to buckle on my armour, which now lies rusting in the idle courts of Thrace. But I protest, wheresoever I come, there will I maintain, to the loss of my life, that both thy love, constancy and beauty surpass those of all dames alive; and with this promise, my most divine Rosalinde, I bid thee farewell."

"Sir Knight," answered she, "by whom my liberty hath been obtained, the name of lady and mistress is too

proud for me. Rather call me handmaid, for on thy noble person will I evermore attend. It is not Thrace that can harbour me when thou art absent; and before I would forsake thy company and kind fellowship, heaven shall be no heaven, the sea no sea, the earth no earth!" Thus saying, she caught him fast about the neck, from which she would not unloose her hands till he had vowed to make her the companion and partner of his travels.

This being agreed to, she was trimly attired like a page in green sarcenet, her hair bound up most cunningly with a silk list. Her rapier was a Turkish blade, and her poniard of the finest fashion, which she wore at her back, tied with an orange-tawny-coloured scarf, with tassels of silk; her buskins of the smoothest kid-skin, her spurs of the purest Lydian steel.

All things being in readiness for their departure, the Knight mounted on his eager steed, and Rosalinde on her gentle palfrey, and both bade adieu to the country of Thracia. Therefore smile heavens, and guide them with a most happy star, until they arrive where their souls do most desire, the bravest and boldest Knight that ever wandered by the way, and the loveliest lady that ever eye beheld.

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And the six sisters of Rosalinde turned into milk-white swans? Did they ever get back their human shape?

Yes, they did; but the tale of it belongs to another champion, St. Andrew of Scotland, who was their deliverer, and must be sought for in the chronicle of his mighty deeds.

THE ENCHANTED DOE

THERE was once a certain King named Jannoné, who, desiring greatly to have children, had prayers continually made to the gods that they would grant his wish; and he was so charitable to beggars and pilgrims that he shared with them all he possessed. But seeing at last that there was no end to putting his hand into his pocket, he bolted his door fast, and shot with a cross-bow at whoever came near.

Now, it happened that about this time a long-bearded Capuchin friar was passing that way; and not knowing that the King had turned over a new leaf, or perhaps knowing it and wishing to make him change his mind again, he went to Jannoné and begged for entertainment in his house. But, with a fierce look and a terrible growl, the King said to him, "If you have no other candle than this, you may go to bed in the dark. The time is gone by; I am no longer a fool." And when the old man asked what was the cause of this change, the King replied, "From my desire to have children I have spent and have lent to all who came and all who went, and have squandered away my wealth. At last, seeing that the beard was gone, I laid aside the razor."

"If that be all," replied the old man, " you may set

your mind at rest, for I promise that your wish shall be forthwith fulfilled, on pain of losing my ears."

"Be it so," said the King, " and I pledge my word that I will give you one half of my kingdom."

"Now listen to me," said the old friar. "You have only to get the heart of a sea-dragon, and have it dressed for table by a young maiden. And as soon as the heart is dressed, give it to the Queen to eat, and you'll see that what I say will speedily come to pass."

"If that be the case," replied the King, "I must this very moment get the dragon's heart."

So he sent a hundred fishermen out, and they got ready all kinds of fishing-tackle, drag-nets, casting nets, seine-nets, bow-nets, and fishing-lines; and they tacked and turned, and cruised in all directions, until at last they

caught a dragon; then they took out its heart and brought it to the King, who gave it to a handsome young lady to dress.
When the heart was dressed, and the Queen had tasted it, in a few days she and the young lady both had a son, so like the one to the other that nobody could tell which was which. And the boys grew up together in such love for one another that they could not be parted for a moment. Their attachment was so great that the Queen began to be jealous at seeing her son show more affection for the son of one of her servants than he did for herself; and she knew not in what way to remove this thorn from her eyes.

Now, one day the Prince wished to go a-hunting with his companion, so he had a fire lighted in the fireplace in his chamber, and began to melt lead to make balls; and being in want of I know not what, he went himself to look for it. Meanwhile the Queen came in to see what her son was about, and finding nobody there but Canneloro, the son of her servant, she thought to put him out of the world. So stooping down, she flung the hot bullet-mould at his face, which hit him over the brow and gave him an ugly wound. She was just going to repeat the blow when her son Fonzo came in; so pretending that she was only come to see how he was, after giving him a few trifling caresses she went away.
Canneloro, pulling his hat down on his forehead, said nothing of his wound to Fonzo, but stood quite quiet, though he was burning with the pain. And as soon as they had done making balls, he requested leave of the Prince to go away for a long time. Fonzo, all in amazement, asked him the reason; but he replied, “Inquire no more, my dear Fonzo, let it suffice that I am obliged to leave you; and Heaven knows that in parting with you, who are my heart, the soul is ready to leave my bosom. But since it cannot be otherwise, farewell, and keep me in remembrance!"
Then, after embracing the Prince and shedding many tears, Canneloro went to his own room, where donning a suit of armour and a magic sword, he armed himself from top to toe. Having taken a horse out of the stable, he

was just putting his foot into the stirrup, when Fonzo came weeping and said, that since his friend was resolved to abandon him, he must at least leave him some token of his love. Thereupon Canneloro laid hold on his dagger and stuck it into the ground, and instantly a fine fountain rose up. Then said he to the Prince, "This is the best

token I can leave you, for by the flowing of this fountain you will know the course of my life. If you see it run clear, know that my life is likewise clear and tranquil; if you see it turbid, think that I am passing through troubles; and if you find it dry (which Heaven forbid !), depend on it that the oil of my lamp is all consumed, and that I have paid my toll to Nature."
So saying he took his sword, and sticking it into the ground he made a plant of myrtle spring up, saying to the Prince, "As long as you see this myrtle green, know that I am flourishing. If you see it wither, think that my fortunes are not the best in the world. But if it becomes quite dried up, you may say a requiem for your Canneloro."
Canneloro set out on his travels, and journeying on and on, after various adventures, he at length arrived at Long-Trellis, just at the time when they were holding a most splendid tournament, the hand of the King's daughter being promised to the victor. Here Canneloro presented himself, and bore him so bravely that he overthrew all the knights who were come from divers parts to gain a name for themselves. Whereupon Fenizia, the King's

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daughter, was given to him to wife, and a great feast was made.
When Canneloro had been there some months in peace and quiet, an unhappy fancy came into his head for going to the chase.
He told it to the King, who said to him, "Then keep your wits about you, for in these woods there is an Ogre who changes his form every day, one time appearing like a wolf, at another like a lion, now like a stag, now like an ass, now like one thing and now like another; and by a thousand tricks he decoys those who are so unfortunate as to meet him into a cave, where he devours them."
Canneloro, who did not know what fear was, paid no heed to the advice of his father-in-law, and as soon as the sun was up he set out for the chase. On his way he came to the dark wood where the Ogre lived. But the monster who was close at hand, seeing him coming, turned himself into a beautiful doe, and as soon as Canneloro saw the creature he gave chase. But the doe doubled and turned, and led him about hither and thither at such a rate, that at last she decoyed him into the very heart of the wood, where she brought down such a tremendous snowstorm that it looked as if the sky was going to fall. Canneloro,

finding himself in front of the Ogre's cave, went into it to seek shelter, and being benumbed with the cold he took some sticks which he found inside, and pulling his steel out of his pocket he kindled a large fire. As he was standing by it to dry his clothes the doe came to the mouth of

the cave and said, "Sir Knight, pray give me leave to warm myself a little while, for I am shivering with the cold." Canneloro, who was of a kind disposition, said to her, Draw near, and welcome." "I would gladly," replied the doe, "but that I am afraid you would kill me." "Fear nothing," answered Canneloro; come, trust to my word." "If you wish me to enter," rejoined the doe, "tie up those dogs that they may not hurt me, and tie up your horse that he may not kick me."

So Canneloro tied up his dogs and tethered his horse, and the doe said, "I am now half assured, but unless you bind fast your sword, by the soul of my grandsire, I will not go in!" Then Canneloro, who wished to become friends with the doe, put away his sword, and as soon as the Ogre saw Canneloro defenceless, he took his own shape, and laying hold on him, flung him into a pit that was at the bottom of the cave, and covered it up with a stone, to keep him to eat.
In the meantime, Fonzo, who morning and evening visited the myrtle and the fountain, to learn news of the fate of Canneloro, finding the one withered and the other troubled, instantly thought that his friend was passing through some misfortunes. Being desirous of helping him, he mounted his horse without asking leave of his father or mother, and arming himself well, and taking two enchanted dogs, he went rambling through the world He roamed and rambled here and there and everywhere, until at last he came to Long-Trellis, which he found all

in mourning for the supposed death of Canneloro. And scarcely was he come to the Court when every one, thinking it was Canneloro, from the likeness he bore him, hastened to tell Fenizia the good news. She ran tumbling down the stairs, and embracing Fonzo, exclaimed, "My husband, my heart, where have you been all this time? Fonzo immediately perceived that Canneloro had come to this country and had left it again. So he resolved to examine into the matter cunningly, to learn from the Princess's conversation where his friend might be found. Hearing her say that he had put himself in great danger by hunting, especially if the cruel Ogre had met him, he at once concluded that his friend must be in the forest.

So without waiting another moment, in spite of the prayers of Fenizia and the commands of the King, off he rode to the forest with his enchanted dogs. The same thing befell him that had befallen Canneloro; and entering the cave he saw his friend's arms and dogs and horse fast bound, by which he became certain that their owner had there fallen into a snare. Then the doe told him to put away his arms, and tie up his dogs and horses; but he instantly set them upon her, and they tore her to pieces. And as he was looking about for some other traces of his friend, he heard his voice down in the pit; so lifting up the stone, he drew out Canneloro, with all the others whom the Ogre had buried alive to fatten. Then embracing each other with great joy, the two friends went home, where Fenizia, seeing them so much alike,

did not know which to choose for her husband. But when Canneloro took off his cap she saw the old wound, and recognized and embraced him. After staying with them a merry month, Fonzo wished to return to his own country and to his own nest. Canneloro sent a letter by him to his mother, bidding her come and share his greatness. This she did, and lived happily with her son and his wife Fenizia.

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GAGLIUSO
THERE was once upon a time, in the city of Naples, an old man who was as poor as poor could be. Feeling himself about to die, he called to his bedside his sons, Oraziello and Pippo, and said to them, "The hour of my departure is at hand; and, believe me, I should feel great pleasure in quitting this wretched world, but that I leave you behind me, a pair of miserable fellows, with hardly a stitch to your backs, owning not as much as a fly could carry, so that were you to run a hundred miles, not a farthing would drop from you. For myself, I have led the life of a dog. All along, as you well know, have I gaped with hunger and gone to bed without a candle. Nevertheless, now that I am dying, I wish to leave you some token of my love. So do you, Oraziello, who are my first-born, take the sieve that hangs yonder against the wall, with which you can earn your bread. And do you, Pippo, take the cat, and remember your daddy."
Oraziello had his father buried by charity. Then he took the sieve, and went about here and there riddling corn to gain a livelihood. And Pippo, taking the cat, said, "Only see now what a pretty legacy my father

has left me! I, who am not able to support myself, must now provide for two!" But the cat, overhearing his lamentation, said to him, "You are grieving without cause, and you have more luck than sense; but you little know the good fortune in store for you, and that I am able to make you rich if I set about it." When Pippo heard this, he thanked her pussyship, stroked her three or four times on the back, and commended himself warmly to her. So the cat took compassion upon poor Gagliuso,* as Pippo was called, for the name means "youngster"; and every morning she made her way to the seashore, and catching a goodly grey mullet, or a fine dory, she bagged it, and carried it to the King, and said, "My lord Gagliuso, your Majesty's most humble slave, sends you this fish with all reverence, and says, 'A small present to a great lord." Then the King, with a joyful face, as one usually shows to those who bring a gift, answered the cat, "Tell this lord, whom I do not know, that I thank him most heartily."

At another time the cat would run to the marshes or fields, and when the fowlers had brought down a blackbird, a snipe, or a lark, she caught it up, and presented it to the King with the same message. She repeated this trick again and again, until one morning the King said to her, "I feel infinitely obliged to this lord Gagliuso, and am desirous of knowing him, that I may make a return for the kindness he has shown me."

* Pronounce Galy-uso.

And the cat replied, "The desire of my lord Gagliuso is to give his life and blood for your Majesty's crown, and to-morrow morning without fail he will come and pay his respects to you."

But when the morning came the cat went to the King, and said to him, "Sire, my lord Gagliuso sends to excuse himself for not coming, as last night some of his servants robbed him and ran off, and they have not left a single shirt to his back." When the King heard this he instantly commanded his servants to take out of his wardrobe a quantity of clothes and linen, and sent them to Gagliuso; and before two hours had passed Gagliuso went to the Palace, conducted by the cat, where he received a thousand compliments from the King, who made him sit beside him, and gave him a splendid banquet.

While they were eating, Gagliuso from time to time turned to the cat, and said to her, "My pretty puss, prithee take care that those rags don't slip through our fingers." "Be quiet! be quiet!" answered the cat. "Don't be talking of such beggarly things." The King

wished to know what his guest was saying, but the cat made answer for him that he had taken a fancy for a small lemon. Whereupon the King instantly sent out to the garden for a basketful.

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But Gagliuso still harped upon the same string, about the old clothes and shirts; and once more the cat bade him hold his tongue. Again the King asked what was

the matter, and the cat had another excuse ready to make amends for Gagliuso's poor manners.

At last, when they had eaten and had chatted for some time of one thing and another, Gagliuso took his leave; and the cat stayed with the King, describing the worth, and the genius, and the judgment of Gagliuso, and above all, the great wealth he had in the plains of Rome and Lombardy, which well entitled him to marry into the family of a crowned king. Then the King asked what might be his fortune; and the cat replied that no one could ever count the movables, the immovables, and the household furniture of this immensely rich man, who did not even know what he possessed; and if the King wished to be informed of it, he had only to send people with her out of the kingdom, and she would prove to him that there was no wealth in the world equal to his.

Then the King called some trusty persons, and commanded them to inform themselves minutely of the truth; so they followed in the footsteps of the cat, who, as soon as they had passed the frontier of the kingdom, from time to time ran on before, under the pretext of providing refreshments for them on the road; and whenever she met a flock of sheep, a herd of cows, a troop of horses, or a drove of pigs, she would say to the herdsmen and keepers, "Ho! have a care! there's a troop of robbers coming to carry off everything in the country. So if you wish to escape their fury, and to have your

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things respected, say that they all belong to the lord Gagliuso, and not a hair will be touched."

She said the same at all the farm-houses that she passed on the road; so that wherever the King's people came they found the same tune piped; for everything they met with, they were told, belonged to the lord Gagliuso. So at last they were tired of asking, and went back to the King, telling seas and mountains of the riches of lord Gagliuso. The King, hearing this report, promised the cat a good drink if she should manage to bring about the match; and the cat promised to arrange the affair.

So Gagliuso came, and the King gave him his daughter and a large portion.
At the end of a month of festivities Gagliuso said he wished to take his bride to his estates: so the King accompanied them as far as the frontiers, and he went to Lombardy, where, by the cat's advice, he purchased a quantity of lands and territories, and became a baron.
Gagliuso, now seeing himself so extremely rich, thanked the cat more than words can express, saying that he owed his life and his greatness to her good offices, and that the ingenuity of a cat had done more for him than the wit of his father; therefore she might dispose of his life and property as she pleased; and he gave her his word that when she died, which he prayed might not be for a hundred years, he would have her embalmed and put into a golden coffin, and set in his own

chamber, that he might always keep her memory before his eyes.
The cat listened to these lavish protestations, and before three days were over she pretended to be dead, and stretched herself at her full length in the garden. When Gagliuso's wife saw her, she cried out, “O husband, what a sad misfortune! The cat is dead!" "Then may all evil die with her!" said Gagliuso. "Better she than we!" "What shall we do with her?" asked the wife. "Take her by the leg," said he, "and fling her out of the window."
Then the cat, who heard this fine reward when she least expected it, began to say, "Is this the return you make for my rescuing you from beggary? Are these the thanks I get for freeing you from rags and putting good clothes on your back? Is this my reward for feeding you when you were a poor, starved, miserable, tatter-brogued ragamuffin? Go! A curse upon all I have done for you! A fine gold coffin you had prepared for me! A fine funeral you were going to give me! All my service, labour, toil and sweat gone for such an ungrateful wretch! But unhappy is he who does a good deed in hopes of a return. Well has it been said, 'He who lies down an ass at night, gets up an ass in the morning.' Let him who does most expect least."
So saying, she threw her cloak about her, and went her way; and though Gagliuso ate humble pie, all he

could do to soothe her was of no avail. She would not return, but kept on running without ever turning her head, and saying as she went :

"Save us from him, once rich, who mourns an empty purse!
But the beggar grown suddenly rich is a great deal worse!*
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PRINCESS RED-WHITE-AND-BLACK

ONCE upon a time there lived a King who spent all his days in hunting. Nothing else did he care for; and all day and every day he was in the forest with his horses and his hounds. Every care of state he left behind him at the sound of the horn; and though many a time he had been told to marry a wife and give an heir to his kingdom, he never gave the matter another thought once he was under the green boughs of the forest and heard the baying of his dogs.

But on a certain day when he was alone in the woods he came upon a white marble stone. On it lay a crow that had just been shot; and the blood of the poor bird bespattered the white slab. “Black, white and red!" he said to himself. "Ah, if I could find a woman with a face as white and as red as that stone, and with hair as black as that crow, how I should love her! She should be my Queen. But where shall I find her?" He went home sad, and his longing increased every day. But nowhere could he see a lady just as beautifully white and red and with hair as crow-black as he desired. So King Meluchio grew pale and thin from disappointment, and went no more a-hunting.

His brother Jennariello, who loved him very much,
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asked what ailed him; and at last the King told him of his desire and his despair. "But I shall find her for you," said the brother, "if I have to travel to the ends of the earth." So Jennariello disguised himself as a merchant, loaded a ship with merchandise, sailed for Venice, and from thence to the East. When he landed in Cairo he met a man with a falcon in his hand; and he bought it, saying to himself, "How my brother would have liked it in other days! If I take it home to him, perhaps he will hunt once more, and his mind will be distracted from its sadness." He met another man leading a fine horse; and that, too, he bought, saying, "It would be just the thing for my brother Meluchio." But he saw no lady such as he was looking for. Though he talked with many persons about the matter, no one could help him.

One day, however, Jennariello, who was a good-hearted man, helped a beggar in distress; and the grateful beggar asked how he could serve him. The Prince laughed.

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But," said the other, "you laugh at the idea of a poor wretch like me helping a rich man like yourself; yet even a tiny bit of wood will do as a tooth-pick." So

Jennariello told him how he was in search of Lady Red-
White-and-Black-but the white must be of marble,
the red of roses, and the black of a raven's wing.
"Have patience," said the beggar, "and come along
with me. I shall go to the house of a certain magician
and beg for alms. His daughter will open the door. Be
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you on the outlook, and see whether she is not the very
lady for the King your brother." This they did; and
when the damsel appeared at the door, Jennariello all
but cried aloud for joy. "This is she in very truth!
Red as roses, white as marble, black as a raven's wing!"
Then he ran back to his inn, disguised himself as a
pedlar, filled a box with rings and other trinkets, and
returned to the magician's house. Once more the lovely
maiden appeared at the door. She looked at the ribbons
and rings and brooches, but seemed to think them of little
worth. "But I have far better merchandise," said the
disguised Prince. "I have silks and brocades and cloth
of gold and golden necklaces, and head-dresses of pearls
and diamonds fit for Kings and Queens. They are now
on my ship. Come with me and see them."
My father
is out," she answered, "and I cannot go without his
leave." "Nay, but come," he insisted. We are near
the harbour. Bring some friend with you and come."
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So she called one of her maidens, and they went with
Jennariello to the ship. Once on board she was shown
treasures indeed! Their owner had not exaggerated
their beauty and worth. And while she feasted her eyes
and handled the jewels, the Prince made a sign to the
captain; and before she knew what they were about,
they had set sail. Loud, loud did she cry and lament.
Then the Prince, sitting down beside her, told her the
whole story, how his brother was a great King, very rich
and brave and beautiful; and how he longed for just
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such a maiden as she was to make her his Queen. And,
not quickly, but at last, Liviella, for that was her name,
stopped crying. By this time they were far out at sea.
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They had been voyaging for some days when a terrific

storm arose, and they were all in danger of losing their lives. Save for the good seamanship of the captain they would have been wrecked. Jennariello mounted the mizzen-topmast to see if there was land in sight where they could take refuge; and while he was up there he heard a sea-bird calling to its mate. What ails you?" asked its mate. "I am thinking," it replied, " of this poor Prince who is bringing home a hawk to his brother. As soon as it is in the King's hands it will peck out his eyes. Yet if the Prince do not bring it home, or if he warn the King, he will himself become a marble statue." A few minutes later the bird called again; and its mate said, "What ails you?" "I am thinking of this poor Prince," was the answer. "As soon as the King shall ride that horse he will break his neck. Yet the Prince must lead the horse to his master, and must not warn him, else shall he himself turn into a marble statue." A third time the bird called, and said to its mate, "Have you seen the lovely damsel he is bringing home to his brother? Now, if the King marry her, the bride and bridegroom shall be devoured by a horrid dragon. Yet must the Prince bring her home; nor must he warn his brother, else he himself shall become a marble statue." Then the birds flew away; and Jennariello was left in

great trouble of mind. Whatever he did evil would follow.

The King was pacing the seashore when the vessel landed. His joy on beholding the damsel was boundless. "This is indeed she of whom I dreamt!" he said. Then he called to his people to prepare an escort for her, that she might go with all honour to the Palace.

"And what is that bird in your hand?" he asked his brother. "It is a falcon I bought for you." "A good gift indeed!" said the King, well pleased. He stretched out his hand to take it; but just at that moment Jennariello pulled out his knife and cut off its head. The King wondered; but said nothing. In a little while he noticed the horse. "A fine horse that!" he remarked. "I bought it for you," replied his brother. "A good gift!" answered the King. "And to show you how I prize your kindness, I will mount it at once." But just as he was putting his foot in the stirrup, Jennariello struck its legs with his knife; and down it sank on the ground. "Has my brother lost his reason in foreign parts?" thought King Meluchio. But not to spoil the pleasure of his beautiful bride, or to frighten her, he said nothing. And at the head of his great train he rode back with her to the Palace. There he ordered great feastings and balls to celebrate his marriage with the lovely lady. In due time the Bishop married them; they feasted, and danced; and no monster appeared. Ah, but he

was only waiting till the guests should go ! At night-

time Prince Jennariello hid himself in the great royal bed-chamber. The King and his bride were asleep. Then crept in the horrid dragon, breathing fire from his mouth and nostrils. The Prince drew his sword, smote the creature here, there, and everywhere; and just as it was attacking the King, gave it such a terrific blow that he cleft the bed-post in two. At the noise the King started up wide awake; and the foul beast disappeared. But there was Jennariello sword in hand, and the bed-post cut in two. "Help! help!" cried the King. "My brother has tried to slay me!" In rushed the attendants, bound the Prince fast, and took him away to prison. Next day he was tried. The story he told was not believed, and though the Queen begged for his life, he was declared to be a very dangerous person; so poor Prince Jennariello was condemned to die.

What could he do? If he spoke out the whole truth he would turn to a marble statue. "Well, it doesn't matter much now," he said. "I will tell my brother all." So he begged for a last interview with him. This was granted; and, fast bound, he was brought before the King. Then the Prince spoke and told his brother how he loved him, and that he had sailed the seas to give him his heart's desire; how he had deceived Liviella and decoyed her on board the vessel; he told all that the birds had said about the hawk, that he must bring it home to harm the King, yet not give him warning, lest he himself should become a marble statue. "I brought it; I did

not warn you; and I slew it that your eyes might not be pecked out." And as he spoke he was marble to his knees. Then he went on to tell about the horse; and when he had ended, he was marble to his waist. And he told about the horrid dragon, and when he had uttered the tale he was a cold marble statue standing there in the Council Chamber. The King wept aloud at the sight, and rent his clothes and tore his hair for grief. Every day, for a year and more, he mourned his brother's sad fate, blaming himself for his impatience and his mistake. Now, ere the end of this year there were born to the Queen two beautiful twin boys; but though this brought great joy to the King, he did not forget his brother. Nay, hourly he lamented him. And one day as he sat weeping, there came in to him an old man with a long white beard, who said to him, "What would you give, O King, if your brother were to be a live man again?" "My whole kingdom!" cried the King. "Your kingdom will not

buy it," answered the old man. "I want a life for a life."
"Then," said the King, solemnly, "I will give myself."
"Your kingdom has need of you," answered the other.
"But would you give those children lying in the cradle
there?" "Never!" replied the King, angrily. "Then
your brother must remain in his marble prison." The
King thought and thought and thought again. "These
babes," he said to himself, "have hardly known life, and
so cannot miss it. For my brother's sake-though
sorely it grieves me I will give my children."

Then the old man bore away the children to the sacri-
fice; and lo! the statue moved, began to show colour,
and in a moment there stood there no statue but a living
man; and Meluchio and Jennariello were in each other's
arms.
In the meanwhile the Queen, who had been taking
the air, came back. The King bade Jennariello hide
himself; and when the Prince was out of sight he said,
"What would you give, dear wife, that our brother should
be a live man again?" "I would give my kingdom,"
she replied. "Nothing more? Would you not give
your children?" "Never! never!" she cried out with
indignation.
"But I have given them," said her husband ; "and
now, beloved, our brother lives again!"
She would not look at Jennariello, but raised a great
crying and wailing. "My children! My children! Oh
cruel, unnatural father! My children! My children!
I can only follow you!" And rushing to the open win-
dow she would have dashed herself out; but at that
moment her magician-father appeared to her in a cloud.
"Stop, my daughter!" he cried. "Listen to me, and
listen, you others, too.

Jennariello cheated me, robbing me of my daughter.
For that he was turned into a statue. You, Liviella,
disobeyed me by leaving my house without permission
to see the treasures on his ship. For that were your
little ones taken away. You, King Meluchio, were hasty
and cruel in judging your brother. For that you had to

look on the statue, a daily witness to your folly. But
now your punishments are over. See, there in the cradle
the babes you thought lost are waking up from sleep.
With Jennariello and your little sons restored go now
all of you, and enjoy the rest of your lives in peace and
happiness." The voice ceased, and the magician vanished
in his cloud.

THE TALKING TREE

ONCE upon a time there was a King who fancied he had collected together in his Palace all the rarest things in the world.

One day a stranger came and asked permission to visit the collection. He observed everything minutely, and then said: "May it please your Majesty, but the best thing of all is wanting."

"What is wanting?" inquired the King.

"The Talking Tree," replied the stranger.

And, of a truth, the Talking Tree was not among all those wonderful things.

So with this flea in his ear the King had no more peace. He could not even sleep at night. He sent messengers and exploring commissions throughout the whole world in search of the Talking Tree, but they all returned empty-handed.

The King then thought the stranger must have been making fun of him, and ordered him to be arrested.

"Please your Majesty," said he, "if your messengers and explorers have searched badly, how can it be my fault? Let them search better."

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But you have seen the Talking Tree with your own eyes? "

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"I have seen it with my own eyes, and what is more, I've heard it with my own ears."

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Where?"

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" I no longer remember now.”

"And what did it say ?

"Well, it said :

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""Ever to wait for what never comes,
Is enough to give one the worst doldrums.”

So the story was really true! The King again sent off his messengers. A whole year passed, and they all returned as before, empty-handed. Then the King was so angry that he ordered the stranger's head to be chopped off.

"But what fault of mine is it if your Majesty's people have searched badly? Let them search better."

His persistence struck the King as singular! So he called together his Ministers and announced to them his intention of going himself in quest of the Talking Tree. He would not consider himself a King until he had it safe within his Palace walls. So he set out in disguise. He walked and walked. After many days' journey he was

at last benighted in a deep valley, where not one living soul was to be seen. He stretched himself out upon the ground, and was just dropping off asleep when he heard a voice, as of someone weeping:
"Ever to wait for what never comes,
Is enough to give one the worst doldrums!"

He started up and lent an ear. Had he been dreaming?
"Ever to wait for what never comes,
Is enough to give one the worst doldrums!"
Then he had not been dreaming. And he immediately asked, "Who are you?"
Nobody answered. Yet the words were exactly those of the Talking Tree.
Again: "Who are you? "
Yet nobody answered. Next morning, as soon as it was dawn, he perceived near at hand a beautiful tree with branches bending down to the earth.
This must be it.
And to make sure, he stretched out his hand and plucked two leaves.
"Ahi! why do you tear me?" said a sad voice.
The King was quite terrified in spite of all his daring; yet he asked:

Who are you? If you are a baptized soul, in the name of Heaven answer me."
"I am the King of Spain's daughter," said the voice.
"And how come you to be here?"

One day I saw a fountain as clear as crystal and thought I would bathe in it; no sooner did its waters touch me than I fell under this enchantment."

What can I do in order to set you free ?

"You must find out the words of the spell and swear to marry me."
"That I swear immediately; as to the spell, I shall

manage to find it out if I have to go to the ends of the earth! Only, tell me first why did not you answer me last night?"
"Ah!" sighed the Tree, "the witch was there! Be quiet! Go away now! I hear her coming back. If by misfortune she found you here, she would throw the spell over you also."
The King ran and hid himself behind a sort of low wall that ran near, and saw the witch come riding on her

broomstick.
"Whom were you talking to?" asked she.
"To the wind that blows," answered the Tree.
"But I see footmarks here!"
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They may be your own."
"Ah, they're mine, are they?" cried the enraged witch, and seizing a great iron club she struck the Tree, screaming all the while:
"Wait till I get at you! I'll let you know."
"That will do!" shrieked the Tree. "I shall do it no more! I shall never do it again!"
But the witch cried, "Ah, they're mine, are they? Wait till I get at you! I'll let you see!"
The King was greatly distressed at this, but as he could do nothing he saw it was useless to remain there any longer. He resolved to go and try to find out the spell. So he began to retrace his steps; but he took the wrong path. When he perceived that he had quite lost his way in the midst of a thick wood, and could not find any issue

from it, he thought, as it was getting late, that he had better climb up into some high tree and there pass the night, to be out of reach of the wild beasts that would have made but one mouthful of him. So up he climbed. But, lo and behold! just at midnight he heard a deafening noise that rang through the whole wood. It was an Ogre coming home, with his hundred mastiffs barking and yelping at his heels.
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Oh, what a fine smell of Christian flesh!" cried the Ogre; and he stopped at the foot of the tree our King was on, and began sniffing up in the air. "Oh, what a good smell!"
The poor King felt cold shivers pass all over him, while he heard the mastiffs rooting and growling among the brushwood around, scraping up the earth and snuffing at his footmarks. But, luckily, it was as dark as pitch, and the Ogre, after looking about in vain for some little time, at last went away and called off his mastiffs. When daylight came, the King, still quaking with fear, slid down from the tree, and began going forward very cautiously. After some time he met a beautiful young girl.
"Lovely maiden," said he, "for charity's sake show me how I may get out of this wood. I am a traveller who has lost his way."
"Ah, my poor fellow! however did you get here? My father will pass again in a short time, and will most surely eat you up alive, you poor soul!"
And indeed they could hear the barking of the mastiffs

not far off, and the voice of the Ogre calling them after him.
"I am lost this time!" thought the King.
"Come here!" cried the maiden; "throw yourself flat down on your face; I shall sit on you, and cover you over with my skirts. Don't even breathe!"
When the Ogre saw his daughter, he stopped:
"What are you sitting there for?"
"I am resting a little."
"Oh, what a good smell of Christian flesh!"
"A little boy went past and I gobbled him up."
"Well done! And his bones?"
"The dogs ate them up."
Yet the Ogre continued sniffing at the air.
"Oh, what a good smell!"
"Well, father, if you wish to reach the seashore in time, don't stop on the way."
As soon as the Ogre had gone off the King came out from his hiding-place and related his story, word for word, to the kind maiden.
"If your Majesty will but promise to marry me, I can give you the spell you need to break the charm."
Now, this girl was a perfect beauty, and the King would have been nothing loath to wed her, but he remembered his former promise.

Alas, fair maiden, I have already pledged my word!"
"That's unlucky for me. But no matter."
She led him to a great mansion, and taking a pot of

ointment that belonged to her father, smeared some of it on him, which at once spread a charm over him.
"And now, my pretty maid, you must please lend me an axe."
"Here is one."
"What is this grease on the edge ?"
"It is but some oil from the whetstone on which it was sharpened."
With the charm he now had upon him, the King was able to get back in a twinkling to the spot where stood the Talking Tree.
The witch was not there, so the Tree said to him: "Take care! my heart is hidden away in the trunk. When you cut me down, don't mind what the witch says. If she tells you to strike high up, you must strike down. If she tells you to strike down, you must strike up; if not, you will kill me. Then you must cut the nasty old witch's head off at one blow, or it will be all over with you. Not even the charm can save you."
"What are
The witch came back after some time.

you seeking for in these parts?" she asked of the King.
"I am looking for a tree to make charcoal of, and I
have just been considering this one."
"Will it suit you? I make you a present of it, on
condition that in felling it you strike exactly where I tell
you."
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Very well. Thank you!"
"Strike here."
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THE ITALIAN FAIRY BOOK
But instead, the King smote there. "Oh, I made a
mistake! Let me begin again." All the while he could
not manage to get a stroke at the witch, who was on
her guard. At last he cried, "O-o-o-o-oh!"
"What do you see?"
"Such a fine star!"
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By daylight? That's impossible!"
See, up there! Right over that branch!" And
while the witch turned her back to look right over the
branch, the King aimed a mighty blow and cut her head
clean off.
No sooner was the enchantment thus broken, than
from the trunk of the Tree there stepped forth a damsel
so lovely one could scarcely look at her. The King,
delighted at having saved her, brought her back with him
to his Palace, and ordered splendid rejoicings and pre-
parations for the celebration of their wedding.
When the day came, and the Court ladies were dressing
the Queen in her bridal robes, to their great astonishment
they perceived that she was made of wood, though so
beautiful. One of them flew to the King.
"Please your Majesty, the Queen is not of flesh and
blood, but of wood!"
The King and his Ministers went to see this wonder.
To the sight she was like a living woman-any person
would have been deceived-but to the touch she was
wood. Yet she could talk and move. The Ministers
declared that the King could not marry a wooden doll,
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From The Trunk of the Tree
Stepped Fortb
Williams
damsel

THE ITALIAN FAIRY BOOK
even though it could talk and move. And they counter-
manded the feasting and rejoicings.
"There must be still some other spell hanging over

her!" thought the King. And then he remembered the grease on the axe. So he took a piece of meat, and cut it up with the axe. He had guessed aright. The bits of meat still seemed to all appearance to be meat-anyone would have been deceived-but to the touch they were wood. It was the Ogre's daughter who had betrayed him through jealousy!
So he said to his Ministers, "I am going away, but shall soon return."
And he travelled till he came to the wood where he had met the beautiful maiden.
"Your Majesty here again? What good wind has brought you back?"
"I am come for you, dear!"
But the Ogre's daughter would not believe him. "On your word of honour as a King, did you really come for me?"

On my royal word!" And he said quite true; only she imagined it was for their wedding he had come. So, taking his arm, they went into the house together.
"See, here is the axe you lent me." And in giving it to her the King contrived to prick her hand with the point.
"Ah! what has your Majesty done to me? I am turning into wood!"

The King made believe to be much grieved at this accident.
Is there no remedy for it?"
"Yes! Open that cupboard and you will find a pot of ointment in it; rub me all over with the oil it contains and I shall be cured at once."
So the King did as she bade him, and took the po of ointment.
"Now, wait till I come back!" he cried, and dashed out of the house.
She understood, but too late, and began screaming after him, "Treason! treason!"
Then she unchained her father's great mastiffs to give him chase. But it was all of no use! the King was already far out of sight.
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So the Queen was quite freed from the spell that bound her, and returned to her natural state again; and as she was no longer a wooden doll, the Ministers agreed to the celebration of the wedding.

From Sicily
THE THREE GRIFFIN'S FEATHERS

A GREAT misfortune happened to a good King and Queen. They were both smitten with blindness. Doctors came from near and far; but all they could do was of no use. It was hard, indeed, that they could no longer see the faces of their three beloved sons, nor the beautiful land over which they had reigned so long and wisely. Now, one day the Queen heard that a poor old woman was lying ill and in great want in a cottage outside the town. She was a stranger and friendless, and in sore need of help. The good Queen went to visit her, and relieved her want. The old woman was very grateful, and she said, "I have nothing to give your Majesty in return for your kindness, save one piece of advice. If you and your husband would have your sight again, send out your three sons into the world to seek three red feathers from the breast of the Griffin King. Alas! it is not permitted to me to tell them the way at this moment. They must seek, seek, till they find."

The Queen went home and told her husband; and the King called his sons before him. He told them of the old woman's advice, and said, "Whichever of you brings me the feathers shall be King after I am gone."

So the three brothers, Julio, Orlando and Tito, set

out; and they wandered far and long. But nowhere could they find the abode of the Griffin King. Nobody they met had even heard of the Griffin King. When they had been gone a year, a month, and a day, and were on the point of turning back in despair, they saw an old woman sitting by the roadside.

"Where are you going, my fine young men?" said she. "And why do you look so sad?"

"We are looking for the dwelling of the Great Griffin," they answered.

"He shows himself to few," replied the old woman.

"And if you find him, what do you want of him?"

"We want three red feathers from his breast to take home for the cure of our good father and mother, who are stricken with blindness."

"Well, you have a long way to go yet. Don't hurry and don't despair. When you have travelled on this road for a year, a month, and a day, you will come to a well at the foot of a high mountain. It is very deep. One of you must go down into it; and if he has courage enough, he will find what you are seeking. When he comes into the presence of the Great Griffin he must bow, and say, 'Is it your Majesty's pleasure that I serve as the lowest of your knights for a year, a month, and a day?'"

On they went, and on they went, for a year, a month, and a day; and then, sure enough, they came to the well at the foot of the high mountain. Julio, the eldest brother,

was let down by a rope. He took a horn with him, so that when he blew it the others might know it was time to draw him up. But it was very dark in the well; and he had not been in it more than a few minutes when the others saw the rope shake violently at the surface; and guessing he wanted help, they drew him up. He complained that they had allowed him to stay there so long.
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The water gurgled in my horn, and I could not sound it. But in any case the Great Griffin is not down there. That old woman deceived us."
"Let me try," said Orlando. So they gave him the horn, and let him down by the rope. He stayed down a full quarter of an hour; but he, too, lost courage in the dark, and shook the rope violently. His brothers drew him up.
"The Great Griffin may be down there," said Orlando, "but if he is, he knows how to hide himself. Unless we were magicians we should never find him."
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It was now the turn of Tito, the youngest. Julio tried to persuade him he was making a useless effort; but the lad was resolved to go. "Wait for me," he said, "
year, a month, and a day. If I give no sign then, you may make up your minds I am dead." So they gave him the horn, and let him down.
Tito did not fear the dark water. Down, down he went, till he reached the bottom. Then he stood in a great cavern, which stretched far underneath the mountain. In the farthest wall of the cavern was a door.

He opened the door, and found himself in a great hall, and in the midst of the hall stood a great winged and feathered lion beside his golden nest. A light from the Prince knew not where spread about him. His fiery eyes gleamed, and the red feathers on his breast bristled at the approach of a stranger.
But Tito could not just pluck out three feathers and run away with them. Nothing so easy as that! The creature was a proud and potent monarch. Feathers from his breast were rarely bestowed, and only as special favours for humble and active service. So Prince Tito bowed low, and begged to be enlisted among the Griffin knights; and he served as one of them for a year, a month, and a day, learning much wisdom and many arts the while. At the end of that time he might claim his wage, and he chose three red feathers from the breast of the winged lion. Then he bowed to the Great Griffin, took his leave, returned to the cavern, and blew the horn.

His brothers were just on the point of going away, thinking him dead, when they heard the signa.. They drew him up. He embraced his brothers, and waved the three feathers.
But instead of rejoicing at this good luck, Julio was angry and envious. "You shall not take home all three," he said. "We did our part in searching too; so it is but just we should each bear one in our hands when we go back to our parents."
"All right!" said Tito. And he gave the shabbiest

feather to Julio, who had been the shortest time down the well. He gave the next best to Orlando, who had stopped rather longer; and he kept the loveliest himself; for he had served the Great Griffin for a year, a month, and a day.
But still the eldest brother was not pleased. Taking Orlando aside, he whispered to him, "He wants to curry favour with our parents. I am the eldest, yet he has given me this feather, which is a wretched thing compared with the one he has kept for himself. Of one thing I am resolved. He shall never return. He shall die first."
"No! no!" cried Orlando. "He has acted quite justly, for he worked hardest and longest." And he tried to turn Julio from his wicked thoughts. But an evil spirit had taken possession of the eldest; and on their way home, when for a moment Tito held up his lovely feather in the sun, Julio suddenly struck him, and the poor lad fell dead. Julio forced the second brother to say nothing about the crime when they reached home; and Orlando, though he grieved for Tito, and was full of horror at the wicked deed, was afraid of Julio's wrath; and he said, "I will be silent." Then the cruel Prince took the feather from his dead brother's hand; and they buried Tito where he fell, in the sands of the River Jordan, and went on their road home, not daring to say a word to each other all the way.
When they reached the Palace they came into the

presence of the King and Queen; and the eldest spoke thus: "Dear parents, we have returned after a long absence. We have journeyed far, seen many strange places, and experienced many hardships. But it has not been in vain. We bring you three red feathers of the Great Griffin, to heal your eyes with."
The King and the Queen cried with joy at their return, for they had nearly given them up for dead. The Court doctor was called for. With one feather after another he touched the eye-balls of both; and their sight came

back at once. What gladness to look on the faces of their loved ones again! "Here is Julio!" they cried. "And here is Orlando! But where is our dear Tito?"
"Alas, dear parents," replied the eldest, "my youngest brother fell into a river on our return journey, and was drowned." He feigned much sorrow, and when the King and Queen wept over the fate of their beloved son, he mingled his tears with theirs. At last, however, the King said, "Let us at least be grateful that we have still two faithful sons. Tito we can never forget, but our house is not left desolate. Julio brought back two feathers; therefore he shall be our heir. Orlando brought one. He shall represent us when we have messages to send to kings beyond the seas."
Now, a certain shepherd lad used to keep his flocks by the banks of the River Jordan, near where poor Tito met his death. And he had seen Julio's evil deed, but he did not know who the three princes were. One day

his dog was scraping in the sand, and dug up the body. It lay for long in the sun and air, washed every day by the waters of the magic river, till it grew tough as parchment.
Then the shepherd made a bagpipe from the bones and the skin. And the spirit of the dead Prince hovered about the instrument; and when the shepherd put the pipe to his mouth he played a tune he had never heard before, so sweet and so sad was it that the very beasts stood still to listen, and the flowers and the trees did not stir in the wind. And a voice was heard singing to the tune the while :

Play on me, play on me, shepherd mine!
From my body thou'st made a bagpipe fine.
Play on me, shepherd, play on me!
King's sons and brothers were we three.
For three feathers I won in a far, far land,
I was done to death on Jordan strand.
I was the youngest, Tito my name;
But Julio envied my deed and my fame.
My brother Orlando blame has he none;
'Twas Julio did it, and he alone."

And whenever the shepherd played on the pipe this song was heard. He went into the villages and the towns, and to hear his song the people crowded about him, and money rained on him from doors and windows.
Now, at last the King heard of the famous shepherd who played in the streets. And he thought, "It may hearten my poor Queen, grieving for her beloved Tito,

To hear his song the People
crowded about hom

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if she hear some fine music." So he sent for the shepherd, and bade him play before the court. The King, the Queen, the two Princes, and all the great lords were there to listen. The shepherd played music, gay tunes and sad; and then suddenly he struck up the melody to which the voice always sang. And it sang now the same song. The Queen began to weep. The face of the eldest son grew dark. The face of the second grew pale. Cried the King, "What is this we hear? Give me the bagpipe." And the King played on it; and the same tune was heard again, the same voice, and the same song:

"Play on me, play on me, father mine!
From thy son has been fashioned a bagpipe fine.
For three feathers I brought from a far, far land,
Was I done to death on Jordan strand."

The Queen cried aloud. The elder son would have slipped away, but he could not get out. The younger grew paler and paler. The King gave the bagpipe to his heir, and in a stern voice commanded him to play. He took it with trembling hands. So terrified was he that he had hardly force to blow; nevertheless, the tune came out in piercing tones, and the voice sang out louder and louder:

"
Play on me, play on me, murderer mine!
From my body's been fashioned a bagpipe fine.
For three feathers I won in a far, far land,
You did me to death on Jordan strand.

Play on me, murderer, play on me!
King's sons and brothers were we three.
I was the youngest, Tito my name;
But Julio envied my deed and my fame.
My brother Orlando blame had he none;
'Twas Julio did it, and he alone."

Then the truth was all out. The King would have had his wicked son killed on the spot; but the Queen begged for his life; and he was sent out to the world to beg his bread and do penance for his crime. Orlando was proclaimed the King's heir. The magic bagpipe was bought from the shepherd; and was much treasured by the King, and by the King's son when he reigned in his father's stead. No wonder, for it changed its song to suit each difficulty. In all troubles the song gave counsel, and at all times made men wise who heard it. And so Tito, who found the Great Griffin, was not forgotten, for his spirit ruled in his father's land.

Front Sicily

THE ADVENTURES OF BONA AND NELLO

ONCE upon a time there was a poor man whose wife died leaving him two children to care for, a little girl called Bona and a little boy called Nello. They were both beautiful children, and their father was very fond of them. He made a living for them by going into the forest and cutting wood to sell in the town; but as he never was happy when parted from them, he used to take them with him every day. They gathered twigs and fallen branches, and made them into little bundles for firewood. After some years the man took to himself a second wife. The stepmother was a cunning, wicked woman, and she had a daughter as bad as herself, and very ugly. For a time all went well enough, but it was not long before she began to beat poor Bona and Nello, and to grudge them each mouthful of food. Nor was that all. She grew so to hate the very sight of them that she began to urge her husband to send them away, saying they ate too much, and were naughty, idle children. Of course, their father would not hear of it; but when month after month he heard his wife rage and scold all day long, and saw his little son and daughter ill-treated and unhappy, he gave way. "Take them into the thickest part of the wood," said the wicked woman, " and leave them there.

Perhaps some grand gentleman may pick them up. Ha! ha! ha! At least it will be a good riddance for us poor folk!"

So one morning he said to them, "Come, my children, we will go to the forest to-day." They each took a piece of bread for their dinner, and set off merrily, glad to be out of reach of their stepmother. On the way they met a man selling lupins. "Give us a halfpenny, father!" they cried. And with the halfpenny they bought lupins, ate them, and threw away the pods. At last they reached the thick woods, and their father said, "Here is a fine tree-stem I am going to cut down. It will take time; but go you farther along, and you will find plenty of small wood. You'll hear my axe, and know that I am not far off.”

The children did as they were bidden. But the man, afraid to go back to his wicked wife with them, tied a hard gourd to the tree-trunk, so that when the wind stirred it, it beat against the tree. This sound the little ones heard as they gathered sticks all the day, and they said to themselves, "That is father's axe." But when even-ing came and he did not call them, they ran back to the place where they supposed him to be working, and lo! he was not there.

Nello began to cry. But Bona said, "Don't cry, little brother! We have only to follow the track of the lupins we ate on our way, and we shall reach home all right." And so it was. In an hour they were tapping at their

own house-door, and calling, "Here we are, father! Let us in!" And the poor man, who was sitting weeping, and groaning aloud, "It is dark. My children are alone in the woods, where wild beasts may be prowling about," hearing their voices, flung the door open, embraced them, set them down at the table, and fed them with all that was best in the house.

You may think how angry the stepmother was! And she was very obstinate, too. Every day for weeks and weeks she urged their father to send them away. He refused and refused; but her will was stronger than his; and he gave in at last. Again he told them to come with him into the far woods to make faggots for selling in the town. They obeyed, but Bona remembered what had happened before, and filled her pocket and little Nello's with beans. Then ate the beans on the road and threw away the pods. And all took place as before. Their father sent them farther and farther into the wood, saying he was going to hew down a great tree-stump. He tied the hard gourd to the stump. It stirred in the wind, and he slunk away home, ashamed, while they worked blithely all day long. In the evening they came back to the place where they had left their father. No father there! Little Nello began to cry; but his sister said, "Do not cry, little brother. We'll find the way back very easily. We have but to follow the track left by the bean-pods." So they did, and reached home safely, to their stepmother's wrath, to the joy of their father, who embraced them, set

them down at the table, and fed them with all that was best in the house.

But do you think their stepmother gave way? Not for a moment! And once more, at her urging, did their father set off with them, and this time to a still darker, thicker, farther part of the forest. Bona could find no beans that morning, but she took handfuls of bran in her pocket, and as they went along she dropped it by the way. Just as before, their father sent them farther on, and said he was going to fell a great tree. And just as before, he tied the gourd to the tree-trunk, and waited till the wind stirred and it flapped against the tree. Then, more ashamed than ever, he slunk away home.

When it grew dark the children returned to the spot with their bundles, to find their father gone. Nello

began to cry. "Don't cry, little brother," said Bona.
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We'll find our way home quite easily by the bran I
strewed along our path." But alas! the day had been
very windy; the wind had scattered the bran; and
they wandered about the trackless wood, getting more
and more bewildered every minute. This time they both
began to cry. At last, after long wanderings, they sat
down against a tree, clinging to each other and sobbing
themselves to sleep.
Next day they tried again to find their way, and in
vain! "Ah, but I am so thirsty!" said poor Nello.
"If only we could find a little stream!" And soon they
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came to a brook. But just as the boy was stooping down
to drink, Bona heard a voice say:
"Who of my shining water doth partake,
Shall change at once to glittering, gliding snake."
"Nello! Nello! do not drink!" cried Bona. "It is
evil water. Wait a little." And she pulled him back.
A little while after they came to another stream, and
Nello, who was thirstier than ever, stooped down to drink.
But his sister heard a voice that said :
"Of my clear water, passer-by, beware!
Unless you'd turn at once into a hare!"
"Nello! Nello!" she cried. "Do not drink! It is
evil water." And she pulled him back.
They went on a little farther, and they came to a third
brook. But as Nello ran to drink, she heard a voice say:
"Drink of my waters, Bona, as they run,
Thou shalt be fairer than the moon or sun!
But from my stream thy little brother hold,
Else shall he turn to sheep with horns of gold!"
"Nello! Nello! Nello! Do not drink! The water
is evil!" she cried. But Nello, who could restrain him-
self no longer, had already drunk. And, lo! on the instant,
he stood before her the prettiest little sheep that ever
was seen, with white curly wool and twisted golden horns !
"Oh!" cried Bona, in despair, " if it has come to that,
I may as well drink too!" So she stooped down and
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drank, and rose up the loveliest of maidens, fairer than
the moon, fairer than the sun! But she did not know

the change in herself; and to her little brother she was still the same kind sister Bona.
Well, after wandering lonely and tired for a long time, they came to a great cavern. They went in, found it clean and lofty and airy. "What a fine house for us!" cried Bona. She made beds of dried leaves for them to sleep on at night, and in the daytime they gathered herbs and berries to eat, and played the merriest games. It was a fine life they led in the beautiful forest. If they missed their father, at least there was no wicked step-mother to scold and beat them. And so years passed.
Now, one day the royal hunt was in the forest; and the King, pursuing the game, came suddenly on a beautiful maiden who vanished at the sight of him into a great cave. He called to her, and she came out and stood before him, fairer than the sun, fairer than the moon.
"Will you come with me home to my Castle," he said, "and be my Queen?"
"Yes," she answered, " if my little sheep may come too and never leave me."
So the King set her before him on his horse; and the chief huntsman took the little sheep; and they all set off to the King's Castle.
"Who is this you bring home?" asked his mother.
"My Queen," he replied. And though his mother thought he had acted hastily, she saw that Bona was very

beautiful at least. Soon she learned that she was good and clever too; and made no objection to her son's mar-riage. It was celebrated in splendid fashion, and Bona looked every inch a Queen. But wherever she was, there was the little sheep with the golden horns.
Now, Bona was too good-hearted to bear malice. She often thought of her father who had loved them so much before he married their wicked stepmother; and she sent kind messages and gifts to him, and told him she was now a Queen. The wicked heart of her stepmother was filled with envy when she heard the news; and she began to plot mischief once more. Taking her ugly daughter along with her, she set out for the distant Palace, where she was welcomed by Bona, who showed her every-thing, and took her in to see her own room.
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Why is that window blocked up?" she asked.
"Because right below it is the sea, and my husband thinks if it were open I might fall out and be drowned."
"How foolish!" said her stepmother. "Are you a baby? Let it be opened at once, I beg. The view must be magnificent! I long to look over the sea."
So the Queen good-humouredly called her attendants, and ordered them to do her stepmother's bidding. Then they both looked out, and as Bona gazed into the water

the wicked woman gave her a push, and down she fell into the sea. A great shark was floating in the water at that moment, and the force of the water carried her right into its open mouth. She was swallowed by the shark!

Quick as lightning, the cruel woman led her ugly daughter to Bona's bedchamber, put her to bed, and bade the maidens tell the King the Queen was ailing. Then she hurried away as fast as she could from the Castle, and went back to her husband's cottage. In a little while home came the King; and when he heard the news of the Queen's illness he went to her room, much distressed. "What is the matter with my beloved?" he said. And the ugly young woman, turning her face to the wall, said, "I am much hurt. That horrid little sheep ran one of its horns into my eye and put it out. Have the creature killed at once!"
Great was the King's wrath! He ordered the little sheep to be taken down to the lowest dungeon of the Castle which lay under the sea, and said the cook was to kill it and serve it up on the Royal table. But a sentry, placed outside the dungeon door, heard a voice from within, crying out in piteous tones:
"Little sister, little sister mine,
In dungeon dark I lie and pine.
And soon they'll come to take my life;
The cook is sharpening the knife!"
Then another voice, as if from the water, answered:
"What can I do for thee, brother dear ?
Helpless I am, though very near.
I grope in the dark,
Inside the shark!"

It was an astonishing thing! The sentry ran and told it to the King, who came running down the steep dungeon stairs, and stood where the sentry had been when he heard the voices. In a little while came the piteous voice from the dungeon :
"Little sister, ah, save my life!
Hearken, the cook is sharpening the knife!
The pot they're scouring lustily-
And the knife and the pot are both for me!"
Then came an answer from the water:
"Little brother, ah, woe is me!
What is it now I can do for thee?
I'm here in the dark,
Inside the shark."
But that was his wife's voice unmistakably; and he called in through the dungeon key-hole: "Little sheep,

whom are you speaking to!"
"To my dear sister Bona, who is inside the shark. Our wicked stepmother threw her into the sea, and a great fish swallowed her. And my ugly, one-eyed step-sister is lying in Bona's bed."
Again the King spoke to the little sheep. "Ask your sister how she may be released."
"Little sister, little sister," said the sheep, "how can you get out of the shark?"
"Let them fetch a great iron hook with a big lump of bread on it, and a rope attached. The shark is now

floating on the water with its mouth open." This was done; the great fish caught greedily at the bread, and swallowed the hook. Bona took hold of the hook, and they pulled her out with the rope. It was the easiest thing in the world! And she came out as beautiful as ever, fairer than the moon, fairer than the sun; and overjoyed to be restored to her husband and her little brother.
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Open the door! Open the dungeon door to my little brother!" she cried. They opened the door, and there came out a little sheep? No, but a beautiful young man with curly golden hair, and dressed like the gayest noble in the land. For you must know that the little sheep had knocked its horns against the walls of the dungeon in its despair, and broken them; and the horns had pierced his skin. As soon as a drop of his blood was drawn, the spell was loosed, and he regained his human shape. Only, of course, he was much taller and handsomer than when he had become a little sheep by the banks of the stream.
The noise of the rejoicings, the singing, the shouting, the clapping of hands, was so great that the wicked step-sister heard it and was terrified. Not having her bold mother near her, she could not brave it out, but fled from the Queen's bedchamber out into the park; and she never stopped till she was well on her way home. The King made it be known that she and her mother would be shut up in his deepest dungeon if they ever ventured back

again, and they were prudent enough not to plot against the Queen any more.
Nello was known henceforth as Prince Cornidoro. He became the King's right hand, and married the grand-daughter of the Sultan. And Bona and the King lived long and gloriously, and bequeathed a rich and merry kingdom to their children.
Narrow is the leaf, broad is the way.

Now tell me your story before you run and play.
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From Sicily
RAGS-AND-TATTERS
A KING, lying on his deathbed, called his only son to him, and said, "Dear son, you shall be King after me. Your three sisters have no one but you to protect them. Be kind to them; but when it is time for them to marry, do not go about asking all the great Princes of the earth to be their husbands. You know the rose-tree that grows in the Palace garden and flowers all the year round. Pluck a rose from it, throw it into the street, and whoever shall pick it up shall have your eldest sister for his wife. So for the second. So for the third."
It was the last wish of the dying King, and his son could not disobey. Therefore when the eldest sister had grown up into a beautiful Princess, and the Ministers said it was time for her to marry, her brother told her of their father's command.
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Oh, I'd rather not marry at all!" she said.
But the Ministers said she must. So one day the young King plucked the rose, threw it into the street, and told the sentry at the Palace door to watch who should pick it up, and send him into the royal presence. Soon there came walking along a fine young Count, splendidly dressed, with a jewelled sword by his side, and brave and
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jolly of mien. He saw the rose, picked it up and stuck it in his velvet cap.
"The King demands to speak with you," said the sentry, stepping forward. The Count desired nothing better. He entered the Palace, and presented himself before the King, who said to him, "You have been chosen as the husband of my eldest sister." The Count bowed low, delighted at the honour. But the Princess grumbled, "I should have married a king, or a king's son at the least!" Her brother, however, had given his word; and in time she thought to herself, "Well, at least he is young and handsome and brave and gay. I might have fared much worse." And so she married the Count.
A little later it was time for the second Princess to marry. She was just as unwilling as her elder sister to take the first-comer; but her brother silenced her complaints, saying, "Such was our father's command!"
So he plucked a rose, threw it out in the street, and bade the sentry watch who should pick it up. By and by a rich merchant came along, a grave, serious, solid and dignified person. He saw the rose, looked at it as if it were a pity it should be wasted, picked it up, and stopped to place it neatly in the button-hole of his fine cloth

doublet.
"The King desires to speak with you," said the sentry, stepping forward.
"It is a great honour," replied the citizen. "I will attend his Majesty without delay." And he entered
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the Palace and heard what the King had to say to him.
"I am not even noble," replied the citizen. "The Princess might surely marry a much greater man than I."
"It was her father's wish," said the King; and the matter was settled.
The Princess grumbled at first. A mere merchant, indeed! "But at least he is rich and honest and not at all ill-looking. I might have fared worse." So she married the merchant and went to her new home.
At last came the turn of Julietta, the youngest. For her the King did as for the others. He plucked the rose, threw it into the street, and told the sentry to watch who should pick it up, and send him in. Now, who should come by but a poor lame water-carrier! Such an ugly, dirty little man! He saw the rose, picked it up, and put it to his lips.
"Now things are getting into a mess!" thought the sentry. But he dared not disobey the King's command, and stepping forward, he said to the water-carrier, "The King desires to speak with you."
The poor man shrank back, looked at his tattered clothes and ragged sandals. But when the King commands-
He slunk up the marble steps and entered the Palace.
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You picked up the rose ? said the King, eyeing him with dismay.
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Yes, sire! I meant no harm."
"Then you must marry my youngest sister, Julietta."
"Your Majesty is pleased to make a mock of me."
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"Not at all! Not at all!" And he told the dead King's command.
"But I am miserably poor, as you see and lame of a leg-and ugly! It is impossible!"
"I wish it were!" replied the King. "But I have given my word."

"Then let her know who she's going to marry, a poor wretch who can scarcely feed her! And if it must be, don't send any dowry with her. I want no fine wife."
The grief of the poor young Princess was heartrending. Her brother wept too, and it was a miserable wedding. But it couldn't be helped. So Julietta went away with her water-carrier to his mean hut on the hill; and on the way all the people who saw them cried, "Look! there goes the Princess with old Rags-and-Tatters!" Home she went to the miserable place, to live there with Rags-and-Tatters and his old crone of a mother.
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This is no place for fine clothes," said the old woman. She gave her a rough dress to wear, and wooden shoes, and made her scour and wash and bake and darn, and tend her husband's lame leg. There was only the coarsest food to eat and little enough of that either.
Julietta wept and wept, and would not be comforted. Now, Rags-and-Tatters, though he did not want so fine a wife, was a kind-hearted man, and he was full of pity for her. But what could he do? The only time she had any joy was when she was asleep, for then she dreamt beautiful dreams. One night she dreamt she was in a
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grand palace, warm and light and spacious. There were people all round to serve her, or to sing and play to her. She wore lovely clothes and jewels in her hair; and the tables were spread with things good to eat. She sat down to table with friends as beautiful as herself; and every one was gay. When she woke up she told her husband all about it. But Rags-and-Tatters only said, “Dreams! Dreams! Think no more about it. It's time to get up and kindle the fire."
But next night she was in the beautiful palace again. And there was no waking up in the morning in her miserable hut on the hillside. No, she was in a lovely bedchamber; and maidens were arraying her in dainty garments. And when she went into another room, servants brought her breakfast and waited for her orders.
"I want a carriage," she said. Instantly a great gold coach and white horses stood before the door. She got in, and bade the coachman drive to her brother's palace. There she invited the young King and his wife to a banquet. They accepted, but with amazement. They rode back with her, still wondering. "Has your husband then grown so rich ?" they asked at last. But she would say nothing of her husband. On their way they drove to her sisters' houses, and brought them, their husbands, and other old friends besides, on to the feast.
Everything was ready for them. They ate, drank, and made merry, and musicians made music loud and soft.

But ere the feast had ended one of them looked up to the gold ceiling. Now, there was a hole in the ceiling, and in the hole sat Rags-and-Tatters, looking down on them all with a grin on his face.
"Why, there is Rags-and-Tatters!" said the guest.
Then, in the winking of an eye, guests, feast, lights, music, palace, all disappeared, and the Princess Julietta was sitting by her hearth in the miserable hut on the hillside.
That evening when her husband came home she told him what had befallen her. He only laughed and said, "Dreams! Dreams! Think no more about it." And she had to take his old coat and mend it, for it was nearly falling to pieces.
Some weeks later she dreamt the same dream again, and, of course, she told her husband about it in the morning. "Oh, you with your dreams!" he said. "They're all nonsense! This is washing-day. Over the washing-tub you'll forget them." But the water in the tub was salt with her tears. And that very night back she was in the beautiful palace, with servants to wait on her, and jewelled clothes to wear. When she called for a coach, the gold coach and the white horses were again at the door, and again she rode off in it to invite her brother and sisters, her kinsfolk and friends to a banquet. Again the banquet was rich and splendid, the flowers were rare and fragrant, and the music gay and soft, just as before. But as they were rising from table some one looked up at

the golden ceiling, and there in the hole the little man was sitting, grinning down at them all. "Look! look! There is Rags-and-Tatters!" he cried. And in the twinkling of an eye everything vanished, and the Princess was back by her hearth in the hut on the hill, clad in her old frock, and darning her mother-in-law's rough stockings.
When her husband came home she moaned to him over all she had lost. In his heart he was really very sorry for her, but he only laughed. "Dreams! dreams!" he said. "You dream sleeping. You dream waking. Now, is my supper ready? I am hungry as a hawk."
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For weeks and weeks she wept every day, and then one night she dreamt once more of the beautiful palace, and told her husband about it in the morning. But he only laughed. Next night, however, she was back in the lovely palace again, richly clad, and with servants to wait on her. Call my coach!" she cried. The gold coach and the white horses were at the door on the instant. Off she rode, invited all her kith and kin, her

old friends and neighbours, to a banquet, and brought them back with her. The banquet was more splendid than ever. But before they sat down the Princess Julietta spoke to her assembled guests. Make merry, my friends," she said. "Treat my house as your own. Only one thing is forbidden. Let none of you breathe the name of Rags-and-Tatters!"
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They all sat down, ate, drank and made merry, and delicious music sounded all about them the while. Then
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one of the company looked up at the hole in the golden roof, and there he spied the little man grinning down on them all. It was just on the tip of his tongue to cry
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Rags-and-Tatters," but he caught himself in time. And the Princess herself looked up and saw the figure in the hole in the roof. A sudden ray of pity lit up her heart. "Poor man!" she said to herself. What a good fellow he is, and how I sadden him with my complaints! I wish he were down here with us in the midst of it all, and enjoying it too!"
And then-did the lights, the music, the flowers and the guests, the palace and all, disappear as before? Not at all! The guests and their hostess rose from table, and entered another great hall, at the end of which stood two thrones of gold. On one of them sat a fair young Prince, clad in velvet and jewels. His hair shone like the sun, and his eyes were of hyacinth blue, and his smile gladdened the heart of every one. While they stood in amazement, he rose and said, "Welcome, my guests! My wife has entertained you while I have been on a jour-ney. You will not be less merry, I hope, now that I have come home!" And he drew the Princess Julietta forward, and placed her on the throne by the side of his own. Then they danced and sang and were joyous, till the stars faded and daylight streamed through the windows of the hall.
For Rags-and-Tatters was not Rags-and-Tatters at all, but Prince Florio, the son of the King of Portugal! A
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wicked enchantress had cast on him a spell, because his father had banished her from his lands. The spell was to last till he should be loved by a Princess whom he had brought to poverty. Now Julietta had broken it when she pitied and loved and longed for him in the midst of her splendour, rags and tatters and all.
But what of his old mother? She was not his mother,

of course, but the wicked enchantress herself, who had delighted in watching the misery of the spell-bound Prince and his wife, and had made him believe he was really her son and doomed from his birth to hunger and rags.
Prince Florio and Princess Julietta went home to Portugal, and there they lived long and gloriously. But the castle where were held the enchanted banquets was never seen any more.
There's my story. It isn't very long.
If it isn't worth a penny, it's maybe worth a song.

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From the Tyrol
GIGI AND THE MAGIC RING
"I'LL make you rich and happy yet," said Gigi [Jee-jee] to his mother. "But first I must out to the world. Maria my sister will take care of you while I am gone; and remember, if you hear nothing of me for a time, no news is good news."
So off he went; and soon he had to pass through a town. Do you think he lost sight of poor folks there? Not a bit of it! The very first person he set eyes on was an old woman bending under the weight of a heavy oil jar she was carrying. "I wouldn't let my old grandmother carry that," said Gigi. "Here," he cried, "give it to me." And he took the jar from her, swung it upon his shoulder, and bore it up the steep street at the top of which she lived, and set it down in her kitchen.
"Thank you, my fine young man," said the old woman, "and may good luck go with you! Will you sit down and rest a while? My place is poor, but you are right welcome."
"I have a long way before me," replied Gigi. "But a seat in your chimney corner for a minute or two I will not refuse." And he sat down and played with the dog and the cat that lay before the fire.
"And where are you going, my fine young man?"
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"Into the world," he answered.
"A place full of wonders, to be sure, but the road will be a bit lonesome for you. Have you no friend to go along with you?"
"No," replied Gigi.
"Then what do you say to taking my dog and cat? They are wiser than their kind; and their company might hearten you on the road."
"Fine
"That would it now," said the young man.
company they would be! Thank you, good mistress."
"Three mouths to feed instead of one, 'tis true," she

went on; "and sometimes the tables of the world are poorly spread. But should that happen, I have something here will help you." She went to a cupboard and brought out a ring. "Take this," she said, " and when you want anything very much, wear it on your finger, and turn it about. Then you'll see-what you'll see! Never lose it, or give it away, or let it be stolen, or changed. For then you would be worse off than ever; and the ring might get into bad hands."
"It is too much," said Gigi, politely. He knew nothing at all about jewellery, and thought it was probably a poor kind of thing; but to accept it seemed like robbing a poor old woman. However, she insisted; and when he bade her good-bye the ring was in his pocket. Soon he had forgotten all about it. The dog and the cat were running along or capering about him in wild glee. When they had left the town miles behind them, the night clouds

began to gather, and Gigi looked out for a place to sleep.
There were no houses in sight, but there was a thick wood.
"We can enter here without rapping at any man's door," said Gigi. So they made the wood their inn and all three snuggled down together and tried to go to sleep. But sleep was impossible to Gigi. He was too hungry.
"This would be the best place in all the world," he said "if only there was something to eat. I wish-oh, I wish a table could be set before me now, with a fine supper on it." His fingers had been playing with the ring in his pocket. Now he put it on, and he was twisting and turning it about, when all at once his wish came true! It was not too dark but that he could see close by him a table spread with a fine cloth, with dishes, forks and knives and spoons, and hot smoking roast duck on it, and delicious fruit, and sparkling wine, and more things and better than he had ever had for supper before.
"Oh-h-h!" he said.
their noses in the air.
couldn't be. He touched it. It was real. He smelt it. The dog and cat sniffed too, and grew excited. He tasted. Oh, now there was no doubt about it! Everything was real-and so good! He ate and he drank, and the dog and cat ate along with him; and they were all three as merry as possible over their banquet in the woods.
The dog and the cat sat up,
It wasn't real, of course. It

The old woman must have been a fairy, he said to

himself. That was a ring, indeed, she had given him! What should he wish for next? He thought of hundreds of things-gold and silver, fine clothes for himself and his mother and Maria, horses and carriages, guns and swords; but the wishes came tumbling on top of each other, head over heels, and they all fell in a jumbled heap. "How stupid I am!" said Gigi. "I can't imagine what I wish for most. Well, I've often heard that people lose their heads when good luck comes their way; but I'd like to keep mine on my shoulders." Then he lay down again on the bed of leaves, with the dog at his head and the cat at his feet; and they all fell fast asleep. He woke next morning early, and was up and astir, with the dog and the cat at his heels; and everything about him shone and sang. There was nothing so fine in all the world as stepping out into the fresh morning world. Horses and carriages? He laughed at the idea. Two good legs and a sapling from the wood where he had slept, were better than the King's state coach. Up hill and down dale, through wood and field, by stream and meadow he went, easily, cheerily, and his two good friends were the best of company. At last he came to a fine palace built on the roadside; and out of an upper window looked a beautiful maiden, and she smiled as Gigi passed below.

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Oh, I could look at her all day long! he said
But she would never speak to a poor boy like me."

He sighed. “Oh, I wish"; and as he said the word, he remembered he could have whatever he wanted in the world. The ring was on his finger on the instant; and he turned it about as he said, "I want a fine mansion, but much finer it must be than the one that lovely girl is looking out of. And I want it just opposite hers." In a twinkling he stood, no longer in the open road, but in a great palace, more splendid than any he had ever seen; and when he looked out at the window, there was the maiden at the window opposite, and smiling, quite plainly smiling at him. Yet he was still Gigi, in his old clothes with the dust of the road on them; and his dog and cat were there at his heels. Well, decidedly it was a ring worth having! He wished for fine clothes. They were on his back. For servants. They came at his call. For meat and drink. He did not know the names of all the fine things that were set before him.

"Perhaps she would speak to me now," he said. There was no doubt about that. The very next morning her father and mother came and called on him, and said they wished to make the acquaintance of their new

neighbour, who was evidently an eminent gentleman. They could hardly take their eyes off his fine furniture, his fine clothes, and the gold chain he wore about his neck. They flattered him a great deal; and Gigi thought they were very amiable people indeed.
Next day he returned their call, and received a cordial welcome. He was presented to their only daughter

Maliarda, and the two young people quickly made friends. Before the day was over Gigi had asked her hand in marriage, and her parents, who thought he must be at least a great Prince, or favoured by an enchanter, were only too glad to consent. They thought Gigi would be very useful to them.
Now, on the eve of the wedding-day they all paid a visit to Gigi, and while they talked together Maliarda asked him to tell her how it came about that his splendid house had sprung up so suddenly. He was the simplest, truthfullest lad in the world; and so he told her all about his journeying into the world, his meeting with the old woman, her present of the ring, and everything that followed. "And do you keep that precious ring always on your finger?" she asked. "Always!" he replied.

Night and day, waking and sleeping."
She whispered the secret to her mother. When they were having supper, the mother poured something from a phial into Gigi's wine while his back was turned, and into the plates of his dog and cat under the table. It was a sleep-drink she had given them; and soon after Gigi's eyes began to close, and the cat and dog slept and snored.
"Your lord is weary after hunting," said the father to the servant who was waiting. "Carry him to that couch; and we will take our leave." Then he called all the servants together, and said, "Come to my house. I have your master's orders to instruct you in your duties

to-morrow." And they followed him out of the palace. But Maliarda stayed behind a moment; and going up to Gigi, as he lay in a deep sleep, she took the ring from his finger and then fled. His dog and cat were too drowsy to warn him.
Once out of the house, she put the ring on her finger, and as she turned it she said, "I wish that lord Gigi's palace be removed to the highest, steepest, snowiest peak of yonder mountain range!" And on the instant the palace disappeared and was removed to where she had decreed. Maliarda ran back to her parents' house and told what had happened. They feigned surprise, and

turning to the servants, informed them of the vanishing of their master's house, and said, "Your master must have been an evil magician. He has played a cruel trick on you. What an escape our daughter has had!" Then they gave the servants some money and dismissed them.
When Gigi awoke next morning he was shivering and shaking. Where was he? In his own palace, though evidently he had not gone to bed. And there were his two friends, the dog and the cat. But why was he so cold? He got up, walked to the window, and looked out, expecting to see the palace of his neighbours, and perhaps thinking to catch a glimpse of Maliarda. This was his wedding-day! But all familiar things had vanished, and he only saw mountain peaks and snow and sky. What did it mean? He rang the bell violently. No one answered. He called for his valet, for his butler,

for his cook, for his coachman. Nobody came. The house was quite still. He searched upstairs and downstairs, and found he was alone in his palace, save for the dog and cat, and on the top of the highest mountain peak. Beneath him could be seen only ice and snow and terrible precipices !
"Who has done this to me?" he cried. "Have I an enemy? What witch or wizard have I offended? Well, what does it matter? I have only to wish myself down and turn my ring." But his ring was gone! Who was the thief? He tried to recall what had happened. He had been very sleepy at supper-time. He did not remember getting up from the table, or bidding his guests good-night. And only one person knew the value of the ring! "Oh, could his beautiful Maliarda be a traitor?"
Impossible to get down the mountain. There was no path; and if he tried to make one, he would perish in the snow, or roll over into some terrible precipice. And there was not two days' food in all the palace! Death threatened him.
Now, the dog and the cat were sorely troubled at their master's sadness, and soon they found out the reason of it. "Have patience, dear master," they said. "Where a man dare not walk, we can. Give us a day, and see if we do not get back your ring."
"You are my only hope, dear friends," answered Gigi. He fed them well, and then opened the door for them.

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So the dog and cat set off, and they slipped and slid and crawled, and hung on, and climbed, and sprang, and helped each other, and never stopped till they were down

on the green plain. There they came to a river. The cat sat on the dog's back, and the dog swam across. At last they came to the palace of the faithless Maliarda. By this time it was night, and the household were all in bed and asleep. Of course, all doors and windows were barred; but in the back-door was a little cat-hole; and they squeezed through, one after the other. Then said the cat to the dog, "Stay you here, and keep guard. I will go upstairs and see what can be done." She slipped up and went to the door of Maliarda's room. But the door was shut, and there was no little hole to creep through. The cat sat down and thought and thought; and as she sat there thinking, a little mouse ran across the floor. The cat smelt her in the dark, put out a paw and caught her. What a delicious mouthful she would be! But the mouse squeaked out piteously, and begged that her life might be saved. "Very well," said the cat; " but in return you must promise to gnaw a hole in that door opposite, for I have business inside."
The mouse began to gnaw; and she gnawed as hard as she could. She gnawed and gnawed till all her teeth were broken; and still the hole was so little she couldn't even get in herself, let alone the cat.
"Have you any young ones?" said the cat to the mouse.

"Oh, yes, I have seven or eight, the finest little family ever you saw."

"Bring me the littlest then." And the mouse ran away, and came back with a tiny mite of a mousikin. Then said the cat to the little mousikin, "Now be

quick and clever, and you'll save your mother's life. Get in through that hole; and creep into the lady's bed, and take off the ring from her finger. If you can't get it, bite her finger softly, and she'll take off the ring herself without waking. Then bring it here to me."
Mousikin ran in, but in a minute she was back again. "The lady has no ring on her finger," she cheeped.
"Then it is in her mouth. Go again; creep into her bed; hit her nose with your tail. She will open her mouth, and the ring will drop out. Bring it here to me, and you'll have saved your mother's life."
Off ran mousikin, and in another minute she was back with the ring. The mice scurried back to their holes. The cat slipped down the stairs, made a sign to the dog, and they both crept out through the hole in the back door.
"Oh, how pleased our master will be!" said the cat.

But the dog was not in a good humour. He was the bigger, and he would have liked to have found the ring and carried it back to Gigi himself. So when they came once more to the river, he said, "If you give me the ring I'll carry you across." But the cat refused. They quarrelled, and the ring fell into the river. On the instant a fish snapped at it, as if it had been a pretty fly. But the dog jumped in, and dived for the fish, caught it. and got the ring from its mouth. Then he said to the cat in a grand manner, "Jump on my back, pussy, and I will carry you across." The cat obeyed, but very

sulkily; and soon they were on the other side. Not a word did they say to each other that was not angry and quarrelsome all the way up and up the mountain. The sun had risen by the time they reached the top; and there was their master waiting for them at the palace door.
"Have you the ring?" he cried. And the dog dropped it at his feet.
"But 'twas I got it back. By my cleverness, all alone, I got it back," cried the cat.
"How could you ever have reached the place at all had I not carried you over the river?" roared the dog. "A cat is a most helpless thing!"
"But 'twas I caught the mouse that gnawed the hole"
And the dog broke in growling, "It was the least you could do after the trouble I took."
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"Dear friends! dear friends!" said Gigi, do not quarrel! You have both been brave and clever and faithful. You have saved my life between you. I love one as much as the other." And with one hand he caressed the dog, and with the other the cat, and took them into the palace and fed them both. Then they were both the best of friends again, and told their master all their adventures by the way.
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"Now," said Gigi, we'll say good-bye to this mountain-top." He put the ring on his finger, turned it, and said, "I wish my palace to descend to the green

plain; and I wish the palace of the faithless Maliarda and her wicked parents to be up here among the ice and snow!"
Next moment both wishes were fulfilled. He was down in the green and flowering plain; and the wicked three in their palace were up on the freezing mountain-top.

Did they never get down any more? Well, I have heard that Gigi had a little mercy on them after some days of anger. He turned his ring, and wished the faithless three half-way down, whence they could scramble to the level, where trees grew and where there were some scattered huts. But their palace was left up on the top; and much good did it do them there! He never saw them again.

As for Gigi, he soon tired of his fine palace; and when a year and a day had passed from the time he left home, he said to his trusty companions, "Come, my friends, we'll take to the road again. I have a longing to see my mother and my sister Maria." So he turned back to his own village. On his way he passed through the town where he had met the old woman who had given him the ring. But he could not find her, nor hear any news of her. So he hurried on home.

His mother and his sister hardly knew him again. That fine young man with the grand clothes their Gigi! Not possible!

"Have you found fortune already, my son?"

"I carry it on my finger." He laughed, and held out the ring.

"Very pretty!" said his mother. "But instead of chattering here I should be getting ready your dinner. And nothing you like in the house! Make haste, Maria!"

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"Don't trouble," said Gigi. See what a fine cook I have become!" And there in the middle of the kitchen stood a table laded with good things to eat-macaroni and roast goose, and grapes and oranges and wine.

"Oh-h-h-h!" cried the two women.

"Sit down and eat," said the young man, "and I'll tell you all my adventures."

They sat down; he loaded their plates; but they could hardly swallow a mouthful for their wonder at all Gigi told them. When he came to the tale of Maliarda's deceit they wept and said he was much better at home with them.

"So I think," replied Gigi; "and I am not sure if the old fairy woman's best gift to me be not my good friends there under the table."

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"To be sure!" said his mother. What should a strong hearty young fellow like you do with an enchanted ring? Fine mischief it has got you into already! Give it to me, and I'll hide it away in my wedding-chest among the best sheets and the winter coverlets. With the money you have on you, you can set up for yourself."

"That is so," he replied. "And if the old wife were

to pass by one day, who knows but I might give her the ring back again."
Is the ring still in the wedding-chest? Does Gigi ever take it out, put it on his finger, and wish? I do not know. When I have passed his way I have seen him ploughing with a fine team of fat oxen, and singing the while, or in the woods with his good friends the cat and dog, for they are still alive and hearty. He has not yet gone back to live in a palace; but all the neighbours envy his mother her good son Gigi.

From luscany
THE WIZARD OF ROCCANERA
PART I. THE CHEATED PRINCESS
THERE was once upon a time a lovely young Princess called Joyosa, who was so well content with her life at her father's Court that she would marry no one. Whenever a husband was proposed to her she only laughed; and if a suitor came to ask her hand she said he was ugly, or old, or ridiculous, and she ran away and made fun of him with her girl-companions.
But her father was growing old, and wished to see her happily settled before his death. So he said, "I have had patience long enough. She shall not have her own way any more." And he invited all the great princes and lords of his acquaintance, and all the great nobles of Europe and Asia and Africa who had not yet married, to come to his Court, telling them that whoever pleased the Princess best should wed her. They came in crowds, each in splendid array, and there was great feasting and merry-making. The merriest of all was Joyosa, but when any of the princes spoke to her of the purpose of his coming she laughed at him and ran away.
"Now," said her father, " among all these she can freely choose. I shall not force on her a person of my

own choice. But marry she shall! I shall be kind but firm."
A great State ball was given in the King's golden hall. And the great princes and nobles came up to Princess Joyosa, one after the other, and asked her to dance. No, she would dance with none of them, but romped with her girl friends, and made fun of all the suitors. At last her father grew very angry, and calling her to him he said, "You shall dance with the very next one who asks you, else I shall shut you up in prison as a punishment for disobedience!"
"Oh, very well!" said the Princess, now thoroughly

frightened. And the next moment there came up to her a gentleman magnificently attired, and of noble bearing. Dark he was and very stately. She could not help standing in some awe of him; and when he asked her to dance, she consented, fearing him a little and her father's anger a great deal more. So they danced together, to the surprise of the whole room. And all the rest of the suitors cried, "She has chosen! She has chosen! Alas, for us!"

Now her father, forgetting how he had threatened her, and thinking she really did favour her dark and stately partner, said to himself with satisfaction, "At last Joyosa has got some sense. That man shall be my son-in-law. He seems to be a very great personage." When the dance was over, and the Princess had been led back to her place, the King called for the stranger and said to

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to

him, "I have not the honour of knowing you, but from your bearing I guess you to be of noble birth. From what country do you come? And what is your rank ?"

"I am the son of the King of Araby. Am I worthy of your daughter's hand?"

"It shall be yours," said her father hastily, delighted in his heart that his daughter should make so good a match.

Not long after the wedding took place, and at the wedding feast the stranger's followers and men-at-arms and horses and carriages were the finest and the most numerous that had ever been seen in the land. Bidding farewell to her father with many tears, for she loved him dearly, she drove away with her husband in a grand coach of gold. She was still rather afraid of him, but hoped she would feel more at home when she had settled down in the land of Araby, in the beautiful palace he had described to her. When they had gone on for about three hours or so, she looked out at the carriage window, and back; and lo! there were no splendid men-at-arms following, no gay-liveried retainers. No carriages, no horses! They were alone and the coach she was riding in was not a coach of gold at all, but black and ugly and jolting. Poor Joyosa called out in amazement and terror ; but who was there to call to ? Her new husband only laughed and laughed and sniggered in a queer way that struck fear to her soul. "You think you have married the King of Araby's son! Ha-ha-ha-ha-ha-ha! He-he-

he-he-he-he!" And he laughed and sniggered on and on, as at some fine joke.

I'm the wizard of Roccanera
Ha-ha-ha!”
"I'm not a prince at all!
Tower, and you're my wife !
"You are a cheat, a wicked,
"No, I'm not!" said she.

lying cheat! And I shall send word to my father, and he'll come and take me home!"

"And who will be your messenger, my fair Princess ? We crossed the frontier an hour ago; and now you're in my country. I care not who is King of it, but I command here!" And he looked old and lean and dark and cruel.

Poor Joyosa! She was taken up to the top of a high hill, called Roccanera, which means Blackcrag, and carried into a dark ancient frowning tower on its summit ; and because she would not speak to him for she was a girl of spirit and said she would kill herself if he came near her, he locked her up in a wretched little room in the topmost turret, and had her bound fast to a little hard bed. He would look in upon her once a day, and there was always a wicked sneer in his voice, as he said, "Do you like me any better?" And every day she refused to speak to him or look at him.

At last one day he said to her in a serious tone, as if he were not mocking, "You need not really be my wife, you know. There is a way of release. Find it and you shall go back to your father. It is the easiest thing in the world. All you have to do is to find seven brothers,

the cleverest brothers in the world, and each clever in a quite different way. They will manage the business for you. Quite easy, of course! I leave it to you. Good-day, Princess!"

As if one could find anything or anybody, bound to a bed in a high turret of Roccanera Tower, let alone the seven cleverest brothers in the world!

Now, Joyosa's father had really been very sorry to let her go; and once she was gone, he often wondered if she were happy in her new home. And he sighed for her, for she had been a merry girl and the very light of his eyes. So one day he sent a carrier pigeon that knew the way to Araby, and by it a letter asking for news of his dear daughter. The pigeon flew to the Court of Araby, but there was no Princess Joyosa there. On its way back, however, it met with a pigeon friend that had seen the wizard and the Princess on their journey, and knew the wizard's Tower of Roccanera. Learning where it was situated, the messenger-

pigeon turned in the right direction, flew straight to the tower and alighted on the window-sill of the little room where the imprisoned Joyosa was bound to her bed. She saw the bird as she lay there, and called it to come to her.
"Surely I have seen you before," she said.
"Yes," said the bird. "I come from your father. Here is a letter from him. He would know if you are well and happy."

"Alas! alas!" said the Princess. "I am neither well nor happy. Here am I shut up in this dark tower, and bound fast to my bed in this wretched chamber. And

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my husband is not the Prince of Araby at all, but a wicked old wizard. Oh, me! Oh, me!"
"Send your father a letter then. He will want something written with your own hand."
"But I have no paper, no pen, no ink."

"Take one of my feathers. That will make a pen. The blank side of your father's letter will serve to write on, and for ink--"
"I'll draw blood from my arm for ink," she said. So she did, and the letter was written. It told of her evil fate, and of the hard conditions of her release. Only seven brothers, the cleverest in the world, and each with a different gift, could bring it about. Then with a ribbon from her dress, she tied the letter to the pigeon's wing, and away flew the bird back to her father's palace.
Angry and sorrowful was the King when he heard the news. He had search made throughout all his land for the seven gifted brothers, each with different gifts. But alas! alas! where were they to be found? Some brought batches of three wonderful sons, some of four, others of five. There were even some who presented six. But when there were seven brothers of a family, one at least was sure to be a fool, and among the lot there were seldom more than two or three with different gifts. Still the King persevered. He asked his nobles. He asked his councillors; he asked the beggars in the street; he asked everybody. At last when he was in despair there came to him one day a poor peasant. "I have only just heard," said the peasant, "what you are seeking for. Now it happens that I have seven sons. They are all clever lads; and each has a gift of his own. They are at your service."

"Send them to me at once," said the King.
them not delay!"
"Let
And on the morrow the seven sons presented themselves before the King.
To the eldest, Primo, he said, "What can you do?"
"I lay my ear to the ground, and hear whatever is being said anywhere in the world."
"Well, and what is my daughter, the Princess Joyosa, saying at this moment?"
Primo put his ear to the ground, and then answered, "She is crying bitterly, and calling on us to deliver her from the power of an evil wizard."
To the second, the King said, "What can you do?"
"I spit on the ground, and there springs up a great river," replied Secondo.
To the third, "And you?"
"I can take the egg from under the hen without her knowing," said Terzo.
"And what is your gift?" he asked the fourth.
And Quarto answered, "I can leap over high walls and alight on my feet."
"And yours?" said the King, addressing the fifth.
"I can bring back life again to a lifeless body," replied Quinto.
"Now you, number six?"
Said Sesto: "Two persons are sitting close together, a long way off, a man and a woman. I draw my bow, and shoot the man, but not the woman."

"And now you, the seventh and last?"
"I stick my staff in the ground, and there rises up a great palace," answered Settimo.
"Great gifts indeed!" said the King. "I hope you will prove as good as your word. Here is money for you. Go, deliver my daughter from the wizard's tower, and bring her back to me. Then claim any reward you like."

PART II. THE SEVEN GIFTED BROTHERS

THE seven brothers set off, and in due course they arrived at Roccanera Tower. Then Primo laid his ear to the ground, and heard the wizard snoring. "Now is the time for action," said he. "The wizard sleeps fast."
So Quatro leaped over the outer wall, and lighted on the sill of the Princess's window, with Terzo on his back. And Terzo crept in softly, softly, softly, and undid the cords that tied Joyosa to her bed, and carried her to the window, without one of the old boards of the floor creaking under him. And Quarto by a great flying leap brought her and his brother safely to the ground outside

the wall of the tower. He alighted gently like a bird, and hurt neither himself nor the others.
But Poor Joyosa, who was not used to being carried through the air, was frightened to death. When they laid her on the ground she did not stir or breathe. The life had gone out of her! It was now Quinto's turn.

He only breathed once in her face, and she opened her eyes, looked round, sat up, and smiled. As soon as she had recovered, they set off as fast as possible towards her old home.
When they had gone a little way from the tower, Primo laid his ear to the ground, and heard the wizard yawning himself awake. Then he heard him go upstairs into the Princess's chamber, and finding her gone, make a great hullabaloo over her loss. Oh, but the old tower was alive then! The servants were all astir. The wizard's few men-at-arms put on rattling armour, girt on their swords, and there were calls, "To horse! To horse! The Princess has fled!"

"On! On!" cried Primo. Run with all your might!" Then he laid his ear to the ground some minutes later.
"Faster! faster!" he cried. "The wizard is on us. He is mounted, and rides like the wind. If he touches us, we are lost."
At that moment Secondo spat on the ground, and on the instant a wide river spread itself between pursuers and pursued. Now we are safe, thought the Princess and her deliverers. But no! The wizard was only stopped till his men found planks, which served as a raft by which to cross. And his horse, seeing his master sail away, plunged in, breasted the water, and swam over to the other side. Furious at the delay, he mounted and rode faster and faster, till he was almost at their heels. Then Secondo spat once more on the ground,

and, lo! another river flowed between pursuers and pursued, and this time it was wide as a lake. It was but a little time gained. Though the Princess and the seven brothers ran themselves out of breath, on came the wizard. His men had dragged the raft after them, and the horses again swam across. Swift as the wind they came on. It was then Settimo stopped a moment to dig his staff in the ground. A great palace arose on the spot, and they all hustled in and shut the door.

There they thought themselves quite, quite safe! For
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unless the wizard touched the Princess, he had no power over her at all. But he was not a wizard for nothing. Changing himself into a little green bird, he lighted on the window-sill, and began to sing "Tiri-li-li-li!" Very sweetly he sang.
"Oh, the pretty thing!" said Joyosa. And she put her hand out and stroked the little green bird. The bird vanished; and there was the wizard at the window, and ere she could shut it or call for help, he was in, he had seized her, she was in his arms! He had carried her out. He mounted his horse, and set her before him on it, and rode away, away, away in the direction of Roccanera. The seven brothers might run and shout as they liked, the wizard was riding like the wind.
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Now, Sesto!" they cried, "do your part!" And Sesto took aim and shot at the flying pair; and the wizard fell as if dead; but the lady was not harmed at all. Back she ran to the seven champions, and they ran to meet her. Surely the danger was over? Not yet.
Said Primo, "I lay my ear to the ground. The wizard groans. He is not dead. On! On! Let us on with the Princess!" And they all ran and ran, and stopped not an instant.
Said Primo again, "I lay my ear to the ground. The wizard is recovering. He is vowing vengeance! On! On! Let us on!"
Said Primo once more,
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He is singing out strong and
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"He is near us, on ? on ? Let us on
Meredith Willams
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hearty. Hark, the thud of his horse! He is near us. On! On! Let us on!"
And the wizard rode after them swifter than the wind ; and he had all but overtaken them. They could feel the hot breath of his panting horse on them when they reached the steps of her father's palace. The door was open and they pushed her in. The seven brothers followed, and barred the door, while the wizard stood without, tearing his hair. What was the use of turning himself once more into a little bird? She had learnt a lesson, and would fondle no little strange bird at a window again for a long time to come. Besides, she had something

else to do just then. She was with her father, hugging and embracing him, and telling him all her adventures, from the moment she had been imprisoned in the Tower of Roccanera to the moment she landed at his hall door. Oh, how her father rejoiced at her escape and her home-coming! Just as much, indeed, as he had repented marrying her so hastily to a stranger.
Then there was feasting and dancing to celebrate her return, and the seven clever brothers were the chief guests. She danced with them all, and with everybody else; but her father said, "I'll marry her to none of you. She shall stay at home with me as long as ever she likes."
The wizard outside heard the feasting and the dancing; turned back, mad with disappointment, and died of spite on his way to Roccanera. His tower, left alone and neglected, has all fallen to pieces.

After her father's death Joyosa reigned in his stead. And the seven brothers stood on her right hand and on her left, and counselled her in peace and war. And it was a happy land and a merry one while they all ruled it together.

NO-EARS

ONCE upon a time there was a King who had one only child, a little daughter. The Queen had died at the little one's birth, and the King had taken in a nurse to bring her up. One day, when the little girl was about three years of age, the nurse brought her down to play as usual in the Royal Garden, and she ran about in the shade of the wide-spreading trees, and rolled over and over on the soft green grass. Towards noon the nurse, who felt very drowsy with the heat, dropped off to sleep; but when she awoke the little Princess was no longer to be seen. She searched for the child high and low, and called to her all over the garden. No answer came! The child had really disappeared.
How on earth was she to appear before the King, who simply doated on his little daughter? The poor woman beat her breast and tore her hair at the thought of it. "O Lord! O Lord! his Majesty will surely have me hanged, to say the least."
The guards came running at her cries, and searched and hunted everywhere, but all in vain.
Dinner-time came.
"And where is the Princess?" asked the King.

The Cabinet Ministers, as white as sheets, looked at each other, but not a word did they answer.

"Where is the Princess?" again.
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Oh, please your Majesty," stammered out the Prime Minister, "an accident has happened!"
The poor King was frantic with grief. He immediately caused a proclamation to be issued :
"To whoever brings back the missing Princess, any favour he asks will be granted!"
But six whole months passed and nobody presented himself at the Royal Palace. Messengers were sent from kingdom to kingdom :
"Be he Christian, be he Infidel, to whoever brings back the Princess any favour he asks will be granted."
But a year passed and yet no one presented himself at the Royal Palace. The King was inconsolable; he wept day and night.
Now, you must know that in the Royal Garden there stood a draw-well; and while her nurse was asleep the little Princess had gone up to it and leant over the edge. Deep down in the glassy water she saw, as in a mirror, another child like herself, and had called out to it, "Hi! Hi!" beckoning with her little hand. Thereupon a great long hairy arm had stretched up from the bottom of the well, and seizing hold of her, had drawn her down into its depths.
Thus for several years she dwelt in the bottom of the well with the Ogre, for he it was who had dragged her
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down. At the bottom of the well lay a great cave, ten times as big as the King's palace. The rooms were all encrusted with gold and diamonds, one richer and more beautiful than the other. True it is, the sun's rays never reached them, but it was light all the same. The child was cared for and waited on as became a Princess of her rank. There was a maid to undress her; another to dress her; one to wash her; another to do her hair; one to bring her her breakfast; another to wait on her at dinner; finally, one to put her to bed. She had grown quite accustomed to living there, and was not at all unhappy. The Ogre used to sleep and snore all day long, and at night he went out to hunt men. And as the child would scream with terror whenever she saw him, he showed himself but rarely, so as not to frighten her.
During all this time the Princess had grown up into a most lovely young girl. One evening she had gone to bed, but could not sleep. Hearing the Ogre about to go away, she listened more attentively than usual. He roared out with his ugly, hoarse voice :
"Call me the Cook!" The Cook came.
"I think it is just about time," said the Ogre. "She is as plump as a partridge."

"We must see," replied the Cook. And the Princess heard them turn the handle of her door ever so gently. Alas, then, they were speaking of her! Did the Ogre want to eat her up?
She felt her very flesh creep at the thought, as you may

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well believe. So she curled herself up as small as possible, and made believe to be fast asleep. The Ogre came near the bed, drew down the coverlet very carefully, and began feeling her all over, just as though she were a fowl whose neck he was going to wring.
"Another week yet," said the Cook, "and she will be a morsel fit for a King!"
As she heard these words the poor Princess breathed more freely. Eight days yet! Ah, the Ogre would not eat that partridge! not if she knew it !
So she thought, and thought, and thought; at last a bright idea came to her. She jumped out of bed as soon as it was morning, and ran to the mouth of the cave, just under the well, and there she waited till some one would come to draw water. At last the pulley began to creak, and the bucket made a great splash as it reached the surface of the water; the Princess grasped tight hold of the rope, steadying her little feet on the edge of the bucket. They began to draw her up slowly, for she was rather heavy.
All at once, crack goes the rope, and down comes the bucket, Princess and all. Plump !
Her handmaidens came running and pulled her out of the water.
"I got dizzy and fell in; don't speak of this, for pity's sake; the Ogre would beat me!"
And so one day passed.
The second day she waited and waited, but the bucket did not come down. She must find some other means of

escape; but that was easier said than done. There was only that one way out of the cave.
And another day passed.
Yet the Princess did not lose heart. As soon as it was daylight, there she was at her post; but no bucket came down. And two more days passed so.
One morning, as she was weeping bitterly and staring hard at the clear water, she beheld a small red fish, that looked like gold, with his tail as white as silver, and three black spots on his back.
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Oh, you little fish, how lucky you are! You are free to swim about in the water, and here am I, all alone, without family or friends!"

The little fish swam right up to the surface of the water, wagging his tail about, and opening and shutting his mouth; he seemed to have heard her.
"Oh, you little fish," again cried the Princess, "how fortunate you are! Here am I, all alone, without family or friends, and in four days I am to be eaten up!"
The little red fish with the silver-white tail and the three black spots on his back came near the edge. "If you were of royal blood," he said, " and willing to marry me, we should both be free. Nothing else is wanting to break my enchantment."
"I am of royal blood, O little Gold Fish, and from this moment I am your bride."
"Then get on my back," said the little fish, "and hold on tightly."

The Princess got up on the back of the little fish, and seized hold of his fins; and the fish swam and swam till he bore her right down to the bottom of the well. An underground stream flowed past. The little fish got well into the current, with the Princess holding on by his fins as fast as she could. But all of a sudden they met an enormous fish, with its mouth gaping wide open. On it came straight to swallow them up.
"Pay your toll-money or you don't pass here!" cried the monster.
The Princess tore off one of her ears, and threw it to the creature; and so they passed, and swam on and on. But lo! They met another great fish, ever so much larger than the first, with its huge mouth agape, showing a whole forest of teeth.
66
Pay the toll or you don't pass here!" And the Princess tore off her other ear and threw it to the monster.
When at last the kind stream bore them into the open air, the little fish set the Princess down on the bank, and with one leap was out of the water. He had changed into a very handsome young man, with three moles on his face.
"Let us go and present ourselves to my father," said the Princess. "It is now thirteen years since he saw me."
At the palace gates the guards refused to let them pass.
66
But I am your Princess! I am the King's daughter!"
No one would believe her, not even the King himself; yet he gave orders that she should be brought before him.

"Who knows?" he thought. "It might just be true!
The King looked hard at her from top to toe; it seemed true, and yet it didn't seem true. She related to him all

her story, only she said nothing about her ears for she was ashamed; she even kept her hair hanging down to hide their absence.
But one of the Ministers noticed them, and cried:
" And your ears, my good girl? Where did you lose your ears?
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The King was indignant at having been imposed upon, as he fancied, and ordered her off to clean the pots and pans in the royal kitchen. Prince Fish (as he was called from the first) was sent to sweep out the stables. So they would learn to make game of the King!
One fine day his Majesty wanted to have some fish for dinner, but in all the market there were only two fish to be found, and nobody knew what kind of fish they were, not even the fishmongers themselves. They had been lying there since the day before, and were even beginning to go bad.
66
Very well," said the King, "have them brought to the kitchen all the same!"
Once in the kitchen the Cook went to open them, and what should he find in their insides ? Two little human ears, still fresh with blood!
He immediately called No-Ears; that was the name they had given her.
"No-Ears! No-Ears! here's something for you!"
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The Princess came running. They were really her ears. Trembling with joy, she fitted them to her head, and they grew fast on at once. And now with her ears on her father recognized her. "It is she! It is, indeed, my own daughter!" And he ordered great rejoicings to be held for eight whole days. Then, as he was very old, he resigned his crown to the young couple; and King Fishikin and Queen No-Ears reigned long and happily for many years.
The leaf is green; the way is long.
My story's told; now sing your song

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I

A VERY fair lady, the wife of the Marquis of Monferrato, owned a beautiful garden planted with roses and all manner of flowers. There fountains played in marble basins all day long, and high shady trees shut off the outer world. Thither would she go when she wished to be quiet, to read or dream. Now, in this garden there lived a pretty, gentle, gold-coloured snake; and the lady fed it, and made friends with it. The little snake

was as charming and graceful a pet as you could wish for. After a time a little daughter was born to the lady, the loveliest baby that ever was seen-so lovely, indeed, that she was called Biancabella, which means the Fair White One. When she was born the nurses saw thin faint lines round her neck, which in a few days showed themselves like a slender gold necklace of three coils, for all the world like a little gold snake. On the baby's fair skin this was no disfigurement, but rather an added beauty. Now, shortly after this the lady and her husband went to live in another palace a little way off, and the beautiful garden was deserted. Yet had anyone gone there they would have found it still carefully tended by unseen hands.

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When Biancabella was about ten years old, she was walking with her nurse one day, and from a high terrace she spied a garden so lovely and so tempting that she longed to go there at once. "Whose garden is that?" she asked. "It belongs to your mother." "May we go into it?" The nurse took her by the hand, and they went there and entered, no one hindering. But the day was hot, and the nurse sat down on a marble bench and fell fast asleep, while the little girl roamed about, delighted with the exquisite place, with the roses, the fountains, the trees, and the great high hedge-wall that shut out the world. "This must be Paradise!" said the child.
She played and gathered flowers for a long time, and then threw herself on the grass to wait till her nurse should wake up; when, lo ! a little gold snake crept up to her, touched her gently and looked up into her face with gleaming eyes. The child was about to scream with terror; but a sweet, low voice said, "Do not cry out, Biancabella. Have no fear. I would not harm you. I would be your playmate as my mother was once the playmate of your mother. Take me for your little sister. My name is Samaritana. We were born on the same day; but we snakes are early trained in wisdom, and I know what will bring you much happiness. Only, you must promise to be obedient to me and listen to my advice. Otherwise, you will be the most miserable creature in the whole world. Now go home with your nurse, who is waking up. But come again to-morrow; and let there be

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brought into the garden two great vessels, one filled with milk, the other with the finest rose-water. Remember you must come alone to meet me. Now, farewell!"
The morrow came, and though Biancabella felt the

order about the great vessels of milk and rose-water very hard to carry out, she told her mother her desire. And the Marchioness, who never refused the child anything, thinking she was bent on some secret childish game, called a servant and ordered the vessels to be taken to the garden and left there. Then Biancabella ran off by herself to her Paradise. Hardly had she entered before the little snake-sister appeared. Samaritana then told her to take her clothes off, and to bathe in the great vessel of milk; and when the child obeyed she heard a voice say, "Milk, milk, wash away what is rough! Leave not one fault in her, not the least!" And the little gold snake coiled itself about her body the while, gently and playfully. Then Samaritana told her to bathe in the vessel of rose-water, and the voice said, "Water, water, wash her white and rosy! Make her sweet and fragrant for evermore!" When she came out of the two baths she seemed to glow with new life. While she was dressing her snake-sister commanded her to tell no one; then glided away, and the little girl ran home.

What was her mother's surprise when she saw her daughter, who had gone out to play a very pretty little girl indeed, return to her so entrancingly beautiful that all who looked on the child cried out with admiration!

Biancabella was the only one who seemed unconscious of the change; and when they asked what had happened to her she had nothing to tell. Then her mother, as was her wont, took a comb and began to dress her hair. But wonders were never to cease! From her hair fell pearls and rubies and emeralds and all kinds of precious stones. And when she went to wash her hands, violets and roses and all kinds of fragrant flowers sprang up, scenting the air around, so that the place seemed like a garden of delight! The lady ran in haste to tell her husband.

At first he would not believe it; but at the sight of his young daughter he was filled with amazement; and both parents saw that there had been given to them the loveliest creature in the whole world.

Such a thing could not remain secret. The fame of Biancabella spread far and wide; and as her beauty increased every year, as the jewels never grew less, nor the odours about her less sweet, by the time she had grown up there was not a Prince or King in all the world but wanted her as wife for himself or his heir. Her parents, however, were in no hurry to choose the first-comer or the next. "There is time," they said. "Our daughter is more than worthy of the best." But at last they agreed they had found the best in Ferrandino, King of Naples, the bravest, the handsomest, the goodliest young man that ever was seen. So the two young people were betrothed, and in a short time were married.

Now, Biancabella had been wont to go to the lovely and
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lonely garden every day, to play with her little snake sister, and to listen to her advice, which was always good and wise. Only tell me everything and I will guide you," said Samaritana. But in the excitement of the coming of Ferrandino, the betrothal and the marriage festivities, she had forgotten and neglected her little sister. However, before setting out with her husband for her new home, she went to the garden to tell all that had happened. "Samaritana!" she cried, "Samaritana!" But no voice answered; and no little sister appeared. And Biancabella was sad and full of remorse.

Now, in Naples there was one person from whom the young Queen got no good welcome. This was King Ferrandino's stepmother, who had two daughters of her own.

Their father had been an ugly dwarf; and they were ill-shapen and hideous, and very like him. Nevertheless their mother had hoped the King would have chosen one of them for his wife. So she conceived a great dislike for the new Queen before ever she set eyes on her; and though she feigned pleasure and admiration when Ferrandino presented Biancabella to her, that was only part of her wickedness.

Now, the Kingdom of Naples was threatened at this time by the very powerful King of Tunis; and Ferrandino was forced to gather his army, leave his young wife, and hurry off to the defence of his country. He left Biancabella in charge of his stepmother, begging her to look on her as her own daughter. Scarcely had he gone, when the
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cruel woman hired some wicked men and bribed them with a great reward to decoy the Queen to a dark wood and there to take her life. The money was to be paid them when they should bring proof that she was dead. They were, indeed, wicked men, but Biancabella was so beautiful and gentle that their stony hearts were a little softened, and they resolved to leave her life at least. So they went no further than cutting off her hands and taking out her eyes. These they brought back to the horrid woman; and as soon as they had received their reward they ran away, wasted the money, and ere long came to a very bad end.

Meanwhile the stepmother sent out word throughout the Kingdom that her two daughters had died; also that the Queen was very ill of a fever, was worn to a shadow, and much changed. The ugly daughters were not dead, of course. One of them was hidden. The other, her

mother's favourite, was introduced into the King's palace and passed off as the Queen, who, it was said, had lost all her beauty in consequence of her illness.
Everywhere in the campaign the brave Ferrandino was victorious; and when the war was over he hurried back to Naples to his Biancabella. But there came out to meet him-not the Biancabella he knew, but a worn, shrivelled, yellow, misshapen creature from whom he turned away in disgust.
"Sad, indeed, it is, my lord!" said his stepmother. "That grievous malady has wrought havoc on her beauty. But she sorely needs consolation and kindness from you.

Do not turn away from her!" "That my Biancabella ? Impossible!" he said. "And her hair, her beautiful hair from which the jewels dropped?" He called one of the Queen's maidens to comb her mistress's locks, and there dropped out-not pearls and precious stones but horrid little frogs!
"Take her away!" he ordered. "If she is ill, let her be well tended. But I will see her no more." And she was kept apart from him in a distant part of the Palace, and Ferrandino mourned and wept over her evil fate and his own.
II
Now let us see what had been happening to the real Biancabella in the meanwhile. We left her with her lovely hands cut off, her lovely eyes torn out, blind and helpless in the forest. She cried and cried to her sister, "Samaritana! Samaritana, come to me!" But there was no answer. Just as she was giving up all hope there came through the wood towards her an old man with a kind and gentle face, which Biancabella could not see, and she trembled with fear on hearing his approach. When he saw the poor lady sightless and maimed, he was full of pity, and he spoke to her so kindly that she was a little comforted, and did not refuse when he bade her come along with him. He took her home to his wife and three daughters, who lived on the edge of the forest. His wife grumbled and said, "We are poor people. How

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can we feed her? Besides, how do we know she is not some wicked creature ? She may bring evil upon us." But her husband silenced her, and said innocence as clearly as beauty was written on the young stranger's face. So she was tended by the woodman's daughters; and when one of them began to comb her hair, out of it rained pearls and rubies and other precious stones. These poor folks had never seen such treasures! And when they

brought her water to wash her face and arms, violets and roses sprang up about them, and a goodly odour filled the whole house. You may imagine how glad they were they had given shelter to the wounded stranger! And when Biancabella talked of going away they would not hear of it, but petted and caressed her, and begged her to stay with them for ever and ever.

However, Biancabella had her way at last, and got leave of absence for some hours. According to her wish the old woodman led her back to the spot where the ruffians had attacked and maimed her. Then she ordered him to leave her, and to come back for her in the evening. Up and down the wood she wandered, calling on her snake-sister for pity and help. "Samaritana! Samaritana, come to me!" But still there was no answer, and the hours wore on. Then said Biancabella, "Sightless and without hands, what use have I for life any more?" And she turned aside to throw herself into a deep pool near by, when a voice in her ear called "Stay! Would you take your life before you have had time to make good

use of it?" Biancabella started back in terror. Again she heard the voice : "Fear not. I am Samaritana whom you have been calling." "Ah, but you were long in coming!" said the young Queen. "See what they have done to me. Sightless I am; and they have cut off my hands! And here I am in a dark forest far from my home! Ah, Samaritana, I neglected you and forgot you in a time of hurry and excitement. Nor did I think of asking your counsel about my marriage. I was wrong and have been punished."

Then said Samaritana: "You have suffered. Now I will heal you." And a little rustling was heard among the leaves. It was the little gold snake winding its way farther into the forest. "Follow me," it said, and it led her to a plant of wonderful power and virtue. "Bend down," it said, "and touch these leaves with your poor wrists." And Biancabella did so. "Bend down once more and let these flowers touch your eye-sockets." And Biancabella obeyed. Then lo, her eyes came back, as bright and beautiful as ever; and her hands came back as soft and white as before! Nor did the wonders cease there; for the little gold snake vanished just as she was about to seize it in her new-found hands and caress it; and in its place there stood a maiden nearly as beautiful as Biancabella herself. "Oh-h-h-h!" cried Biancabella.

My sister indeed!" "For this had I to wait," said Samaritana, "till the chance was given me of healing the wounds of the loveliest lady in all the world."

When the old man returned and found Biancabella healed he marvelled greatly. He hardly knew her again. "Yes, good friend, it is, indeed, I!" she said. "And here is the physician by my side, my sister, who came here to find me and to heal my wounds. Now take us both back with you and give us shelter for the night."

III

But these lovely ladies could not remain long in a woodman's cottage. So one day, taking their host and his family with them, they set out for Naples. When they came near the palace of the King, which was built among beautiful meadows near the seashore, they rested; and as they had engaged no lodging, the company meant to camp there for the night. But Samaritana had her own plan. Taking in her hand a laurel branch, she waved it three times, uttered some secret words, and, lo! a great palace sprang up, very splendid and beautiful, and ready for them to live in.

Great was the surprise of King Ferrandino next morning when he looked out from his window and saw a palace as fine as his own where no palace had been the day before. He rubbed his eyes but there it was. He called his attendants. They saw it too. The whole household ran to stare and gape. And while the King gazed he saw at a window of the new palace two beautiful ladies; and the face of one of them was exceedingly like that of his

fair Queen before the terrible illness had ruined her beauty. It was only courteous, he said, to pay a visit to his new neighbours; so with a fine train of courtiers in attendance he set out to pay his respects to the fair strangers. He was graciously received, and shown all the wonders of the new palace, which were many and splendid, but always he looked aside from these wonders to the lovelier of the two ladies. Then he sighed and thought of Biancabella as he had seen her first.

When he had been shown everything, the ladies asked if he would honour them by coming to an entertainment they were preparing. And would he bring his Queen and the ladies of his household ? For himself he promised, but as to the Queen, he explained that she never left the palace. However, they begged so sweetly that for once she would break this rule in their favour that he could only consent.

When, therefore, the appointed day arrived, he sent word to his ugly Queen, whom he never saw, that she was to come out of her seclusion, and dress in her finest robe, and wear the crown jewels. And he called, too, for his stepmother, and ordered both the ladies to accompany him to the entertainment in the new palace.

It was a great feast. There were meats of the finest

and rarest, fruits from every country in the world; wonderful flowers and brilliant lamps shone down on the splendid jewelled company. But amid all the dazzling riches Ferrandino could not stay his eyes save on Biancabella.
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At length the servants cleared the tables in the great hall; and then Samaritana rose and said, "Your Majesties, it is our custom after dinner to entertain our guests with music and story-telling. If it does not weary you, there are some notable singers and musicians ready at hand." And the King said nothing would please him more than to hear them. Whereupon Samaritana called on Silveria, the prettiest of the woodman's daughters. She came forward and stood before the Royal company with a lyre in her hand. She struck the strings with cunning fingers, while she sang in the sweetest of voices the story of Biancabella, of her beauty, her marriage with a King, and of her cruel treatment at the hands of the King's stepmother. Yet she never named any of them by their own names.
At the end Samaritana rose and said, "O King, this is a true tale. What should be the punishment of the wicked woman who devised this crime?" Whereupon the stepmother, thinking to brave the thing out, cried, "Throw her into a fiery furnace."
"Then you are the guilty woman! You and no other!" And turning to the King, Samaritana said, "See, here is your own wife Biancabella! Would you have proof of it?" She called another of the woodman's daughters, and ordered her there and then to comb Biancabella's golden hair, and to bring water to wash her hands. And lo! out of the hair rained a shower of pearls and rubies and emeralds and all manner of precious stones; and
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when her hands touched the water, roses and violets sprang up, and the sweetest odour pervaded the whole palace. "Would you have more proof still?" She pointed to Biancabella's neck, and showed her birth-mark, the triple gilt coil imprinted on it. The King, knowing all at last, embraced her with tears of joy. And the whole Court rejoiced-save only the wicked stepmother and her ugly daughter. Nay, the King's people would even have heated the furnace on the instant, and given the cruel woman the punishment she herself had suggested; but Biancabella was too gentle to allow it. So the two wretched

creatures, mother and daughter, went away and took ship for a distant land, and dwelt there obscurely to the end of their days. But Ferrandino and his Queen lived happily; and Samaritana remained with them in the Palace, and gave them wise counsel in their affairs. And the woodman's three daughters married lords about the Court, and the King and the Queen danced at their weddings.

They feasted, they danced, so brave and fine.
Now tell me your story, for I've told you mine.

WHO MARRIED THE PRINCESS ?

THERE was once upon a time a poor man who had three sons. He brought them up well, but when they had grown to be fine tall fellows, the little farm afforded them a very scanty living. So they made up their minds to be

no longer a burden to their father, but to go out to the world and seek their fortunes. First they asked their father's blessing, and then they set off together, each with a tiny pack on his back, containing all he possessed, and a stick in his hand cut from the nut-tree in the garden.

They walked cheerily on, making great plans for the future, till they came to a place where three roads met. Here they agreed to part, promising, however, to come back again to the same spot on St. John's Day seven years hence.

Well, the eldest brother went on his way till, in a week or so, he came to a camp of soldiers. Straightway he enrolled himself in their company and marched with them off to the wars. Ere long he was counted the best fighting man of them all; and so able-bodied, alert and nimble was he, that it was the easiest thing in the world for him to scale any fortress wall with a weapon in each hand.

The second brother went on by the second road till he reached a seaport town. There he apprenticed himself to a shipbuilder, and learnt the business so well that he became the best workman in the trade. No ships were as good as those he built, and in a few years he became a famous man.

As for the third, he had no wish to learn any trade at all. He sauntered on, turning this way and that as the whim pleased him, till one day of days he came to a wood. He entered it and flung himself down on a bed of leaves. Not to sleep, however. He was no dull, sleepy fellow. He lay there still and quiet, because he was listening to a nightingale singing so sweetly, that in all the world there seemed to be nothing else to do but lie there and

listen. And when the bird flew away he got up and

followed it, to hear the song in a fresh place. Thus he travelled through woods and forests and beautiful lonely places, always tracking the bird. To learn its song, and the songs of other birds, was trade enough for him. He forgot the world, forgot about making a fortune, well content to live in the woods with the wild things, eating berries and herbs and nuts, talking with the birds, and learning their tongue. This he did because they feared him not at all, but gathered round him, perched on him, ate out of his hand, and taught him all the secrets of their speech and music.

When seven years had gone by, the first and second brothers came to the appointed meeting-place even before the day they had named. The third would have forgotten, had not a little bird trilled to him a reminder that his two brothers would be waiting, and would think him faithless did he not set off on the instant for the meeting-place at the three cross-roads. So he hurried away from his beloved woods, trudged along, whistling to the birds on the wayside trees, or talking to those that perched on his hat or shoulder, just as if he had been a friendly branch fluttered by the wind. He reached the spot on the morning of St. John's Day. Now, when his brothers caught sight of him, he was so wild and long-haired and shaggy that they did not know him again; but when he greeted and embraced them they recognised his voice. "Alas!" they said to themselves, looking at his ragged garments, "into what a state of poverty

has he fallen!" So they unloaded the packs from their mules, got out new raiment for him, and clothed him on the spot. Then they all went together to an inn to celebrate their meeting after such long absence.

Now, while they sat at table, telling each other their adventures, a little bird on a tree by the door sang a song in their ears. A loud, piercing melody it was; but only the youngest brother understood it.

"Do you hear that bird?" he said. "Do you know what it is singing? No! Well, listen and I will reveal the meaning of its song. 'Near the corner-stone of this very inn,' it says, 'is hidden a treasure. It has lain there hundreds and hundreds of years. Dig for it, and it shall be yours.' That is what the little bird sings; and birds always sing the truth. Eh, my brothers, shall we dig for it?"

The eldest laughed, but he consented to dig all the same. All three dug; the treasure was found, shared quite fairly between them, and they were now very rich

men. So they went back to their old home, embraced their father, told him all their adventures, and provided for his comfort for the remainder of his days.
While they were resting at home, one day a bird perched on the garden wall and sang. Only the youngest brother knew the meaning of the song, of course.
"Do you hear that bird?" he said. "Shall I tell you what it is singing? Listen then. In the Ægean Sea there is an island called Chios, where the daughter of

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Apollo has built a great marble palace. But a fiery serpent guards the entrance, and on the threshold is a basilisk. Inside the castle the fair Princess Aglea is a prisoner, sitting lonely and disconsolate. Whoever shall rescue her shall have her to wife, and her treasure of gold and silver and crystal and precious stones shall be his too."
The three brothers could not hear of the fair Aglea being left a prisoner there any longer; and they planned together how she might be rescued. First, the second brother made a fine, swift, strong ship; and all three sailed away in it to the island. A great storm arose, and had not the ship been the best and strongest in the world, it would have been dashed to pieces on the rocks of the island. They landed on Chios, saw the castle, with the terrible guardians of its entrance. These they evaded, creeping stealthily round to the back, where was no door, but a lofty tower with no openings of any kind except a window near the summit. The eldest brother, a dagger in each hand, to stick into the crevices for there was no foothold to be got and a rope coiled round his body, set about climbing the lofty tower; and just as he was near the top, the fair Aglea looked out of the window. "We are friends," he whispered, as he grasped the window-sill; and he told her their plan of rescue. Getting inside, he tied the strong rope round her, and gently let her down to his brothers below. Then he searched about the tower and palace till he discovered the treasure of silver and gold and precious stones. Gathering it hastily together, he

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made it into several bundles, and these he lowered also. Last of all, he came down himself.
The three brothers then bore the lovely lady and her wealth safely to the fine home they had built for their

father. "Take my treasure," she said. "It is a very small reward for your courage and generosity."
Treasure may be divided. But not so a lady. Whose bride should she be? Who had done most for her? They never asked her opinion on the point, but wrangled and wrangled over it, and they were wrangling still when I heard of them last. Will she stay till they settle the question? What do you think?

From the Abrua
BELLA DEL MONDO

ONCE upon a time, in a far-away land, a King lived happily with his four children, three fair daughters and a son. But one unlucky day a great misfortune happened. There came a mighty wind which blew up great clouds of dust and sand, and for many hours the earth was covered with darkness. When the tempest had passed the three girls had utterly vanished. Nowhere, nowhere could they be found. In spite of all the search that was made, not a trace of them was to be seen. The father and son mourned every day and all day long for the loss of the three lovely princesses. Indeed, their brother-Celestino was his name-seemed like to die of grief; so the King forced him out to the woods, thinking that perhaps hunting might distract his mind from its sorrow.
Now, one day when he was by himself in the woods, he saw an ugly old woman hanging by her long grey hair from a tree, and crying in great distress. But her cries were growing weaker, for she was nearly dead with pain and fright. Passing that way, she had spoken to a boy sitting on a great branch and weighing it down nearly to the ground. One of his companions, a cruel, mischievous boy, twisted her hair round and round the branch; so

that when the other slid to the ground, the old woman was carried up, and hung there dangling. Whether in terror at what they had done, or from sheer wickedness, they ran away, leaving her there screaming for help. Celestino, seeing her, climbed the tree, weighed down the branch once more, released her hair, set her on her feet, and comforted her. Also, seeing how old and poor she was, he gave her a handful of money.
"I thank your Highness," said the old woman, "and may you wed the great Princess Bella del Mondo!"
Now, Bella del Mondo means the loveliest lady in all the world.
Back ran Celestino to his father the King, and cried, "Father! Father! Give me your blessing, and a horse to ride on. I'm off into the world to seek for the Princess Bella del Mondo. She, she alone shall be my wife!"

The King thought there was no such hurry, and said one thing and another to calm his son's excitement. But Celestino was not listening. And next day he rode out of the Castle gates, all by himself, into the world to seek for Bella del Mondo. After a time his way lay through a wood. Night came on, and he was tired. So he tied his horse to a tree, climbed up the tree himself, stretched himself out on some stout leafy branches, and fell asleep. But while he slept the wild beasts were sniffing and smelling about the wood, and before he woke in the morning they had eaten his horse.

There was nothing for it but to go on on foot. And now his way lay across a wide desert. Again night came on; and while he was seeking some kind of shelter he saw a light twinkling in the darkness. In another minute he was knocking at the door of a little house.

Who is there? " cried a voice from within.
"A young man who has lost his way and wants a roof to cover him for the night."
"I can't let you in. This is the house of the Great Wind."

What does that matter? Open the door."
At last the door was opened by a beautiful young woman. "What do you want?" she asked.
"I am seeking for the Princess Bella del Mondo. Let me stay here till morning. But who are you? I seem to know your voice."
"I am the wife of the Great Wind." He went in with her to the light; and then they recognized and embraced each other. She was his eldest sister Sophia, who had vanished in the tempest. "But I am expecting my husband home every moment. If he sees you he will blow you to pieces. Get into the kneading-trough." And she shoved him inside.
The Great Wind came home. As he entered he sniffed the air. "I smell Christian flesh," he said. "What human creature has been here?

"What Christian would come into this desert place?"

said his wife. "You smell your supper." And she fed him, and at last he grew calm and quite good-tempered. Then she ventured to say, "And if a man were to come, you would do him no harm, would you now?"
"Not to-night," answered the Great Wind. "I am

too sleepy."
Then she called softly, "Celestino, come, my brother,"
and the Prince stepped out of the kneading-trough.
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Pardon, your Windship," he said. "Seeking shelter
here, I found my sister whom I had mourned as lost. I
am glad to find her the wife of so great a lord." The
Great Wind breathed his acknowledgment of the Prince's
politeness; and the Prince went on: "I am in search
of the Lady Bella del Mondo. Do you know where she
lives?"
"Never heard of her," said the Great Wind. "But
I'll send out my servants the Breezes, and perhaps they'll
find her." He whistled. The Breezes came through
the window and the keyhole and the chinks in the door.
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Off with you," said the Great Wind, " and bring back
news of the Lady Bella del Mondo." Back again they
came puffing and panting, for they had run harder and
faster than was their wont; but they brought no news
of Bella del Mondo.
Next morning Celestino took leave of his hosts, who
had advised him to seek help from the Sirocco Wind;
and they showed him the way. He travelled and travelled
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to quite another part of the world, and at last he came to
the house of the Sirocco. And who should he find was
the Sirocco's wife but his second sister, Olympia! And
he had the same kind of welcome, unwilling at first, kindly
afterwards, as he had had at the house of the Great Wind.
Sirocco had never heard of Bella del Mondo; but he sent
his Breezes out for news; and they came back without
any at all, after three days running and chasing up and
down the world.
There was nothing for it but to journey on. "If the
Great Wind and I cannot help you," said Sirocco, "your
Princess is hard indeed to find. One hope is left you-
go to the Palace of the Great Lord Sun and ask help from
that Mighty One." But before Celestino left his brother-
in-law, Sirocco taught him to whistle a certain tune loud
and shrill. "If ever you are in great danger and you
whistle like that, the winds will hasten to your help."
After many days the Prince came to the Palace of the
Sun; and who should open the door to him but his
youngest sister, Primavera! She was the Great Sun's
wife. Primavera embraced him with tears of joy. "But
you must go away from here at once," she said. "When
my lord comes back he would burn you up if he shot but
a single ray at you. And yet-wait! I have an ointment
here with which I was anointed when I married him; and
I have never taken any harm. Here, take it, and rub
every part of your body with it." Celestino did so, and

then waited the return of the Mighty One.

At last the Sun, a great King, terrible and glorious, came home. His eyes were like blazing furnaces, and had it not been for the magic ointment, the young man would have been all shrivelled up. His sister presented him; and when the Sun heard of his quest, he said, "I know the lady, but I have not seen her lately. Yet who in all the world can hide long from me? Wait here and I shall find her."
He shot his rays this way and that, and after three days had passed he came back and said he had discovered the dwelling-place of Bella del Mondo. "But it is not safe for you to go alone," said my lord Sun. "You shall go with me." Thereupon he linked some little beams together into a chain, and said to Celestino, "Hang on to that." So the Sun went on his great golden way through the world, and the young man hung suspended from the sunbeam chain. And when they had travelled in this fashion far and far, they came to a Castle with a long avenue leading up to its door. Along this avenue were stationed twelve live lions.
"Now then, courage, my friend!" said the Sun. "Evening is coming on and I must set. You will be alone, but if you are fearless the lions cannot harm you. Walk boldly along the avenue. Should you be in great danger, remember the whistle the Sirocco taught you."
So saying, the Sun loosed him from the sunbeam chain, and moved away to his setting.
Holding his head high, neither hurrying nor loitering

timidly, Celestino made his way along the avenue. The lions looked at him fiercely out of their yellow eyes, and growled, but not one attacked him. The great iron door of the Castle was closing as he approached, and he just managed to slip through. Crossing a passage he found himself in a great and splendid hall. In the midst of it sat a lady, and a glance was enough to tell him she could be no other save Bella del Mondo. It would take all day and all night to tell you how lovely she was, and even then I shouldn't have finished. She showed no surprise at all, but running towards him, cried, "How long I have been waiting for you, my Beloved ! Let us flee at once from this place. For only a very little while after the Valorous Prince enters, the enchantment on all things here is loosed. Come!"
She took his hand, and they fled. But as they ran along Celestino saw that the iron doors of the castle had turned to cardboard, and the lions in the avenue to cold stone. On and on they ran, and suddenly they heard a

voice calling for help: and in a minute they saw a youth bound fast to an oak tree.
"Loose me! Loose me for pity's sake!" he cried.
"Do not listen to him!" cried Bella del Mondo. "I know him, and he is wicked, very wicked."
But the Prince was kind-hearted, and as he was feeling very happy himself at that moment, he could not bear to see anyone in distress. So he let go his lady's hand, stopped, whipped out a knife from his pocket, and loosed

the prisoner. And lo! the youth was no sooner free than Celestino was bound fast to the tree himself! Nor could

Bella del Mondo help him; for the youth seized her and dragged her back, in spite of her struggles and cries, to

the avenue, past the lions, now living again and growling fiercely, in at the iron doors of the castle, which was under enchantment once more. There she was shut up in a room with seven walls and seven strong doors. For the youth whom Celestino had freed was no other than the son of the wicked magician who had imprisoned Bella del Mondo.
"Here you are," said the wicked youth; "and here you'll stay all your life long, unless you consent to marry me."
"That will I never do!" said Bella del Mondo. "And you can't live for ever. When you die I shall be free."
"Oh, I shall not die in a hurry. It is almost impossible to kill me. There are great deeds to be done by him who shall bring about my death."
"What deeds?" she asked.
"Well, in the midst of the sea there is a high tower; and your hero would have to enter that tower. That's no easy thing. Inside there is a pigeon's egg; and he must break the egg and catch the bird that flies out. Of course the bird would slip through his fingers. But even if it did not, he must divide the bird in four, and throw the four portions hundreds and hundreds of miles apart from each other. Were they less widely scattered, they might come together, and the bird would come to life again. I should certainly die if these feats could be performed. But how shall they be done? You've been waiting now here for a long while."

Yet Bella del Mondo had hope in her heart, for she

thought of the King's son who had delivered her once. But meanwhile poor Celestino was fast bound to the oak tree. He cried "Help! Help!" in vain. No one came. Then at last he thought of that whistle the Sirocco had taught him. By this time it was day. Loud and clear he whistled through the air; and suddenly the whole scene about him seemed changed. His eyes were dazzled with light and his ears bombarded with sound. When he could see and hear once more, he knew that the Sun was looking down on him, and the winds were all about him, the Great Winds and the Little.

"What do you want?" they cried. "We are here to help you." And when they saw him bound the Sun tried to scorch the rope in two, but in vain; and the winds shook the tree, but in vain. He was still bound. Then the Sun shot a ray into the chamber of the enchanted castle where Bella del Mondo was a prisoner, and asked for her counsel. She told him all that the wicked youth had mockingly revealed to her.

Off set the Sun and the Winds to the high tower in the midst of the sea, the Sun showing the way. There the Winds set up a great tempest about the walls, and the tower was so shaken that the door flew open, and in went the Sun. By his heat he burst the egg open, and out flew the bird. Away and away it flew; but the winds were after it, and they dashed it hard on the rocks. Then they severed it in four portions, and they carried the

portions hundreds and hundreds of miles apart, east and west and north and south. And so they never came together again, nor did the bird come to life the life of magic, I mean, for it never had any other.

Now, at the very moment the bird was divided in four, the wicked wizard's wicked son fell dead on the floor of the Enchanted Castle, and the doors of Bella del Mondo's prison were opened; the bonds of Celestino were loosed, and the lions in the avenue turned to stone for evermore. Think of the joyful meeting of the Prince and Bella del Mondo! And of the wedding that followed! The wedding feast was not lighted by lamps or candles, but the Great Sun came in his greatest splendour to light up the hall, and to show in all its richness the beauty of Bella del Mondo. For music, the Winds caught up all the loveliest tunes in the world, and brought them into the hall to sound delightfully in the ears of the bride and bridegroom and their guests. The chief guests, of course, were the old King and his three daughters; but there were hundreds besides, for the fame of Bella del Mondo had spread far and wide, and all the great folks thronged to do her honour.

You and I are outside. But at least we can peep in at the windows and hear and see something of it all.

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From the Tyrol
THE COBBLER'S LUCK
PART I. THE CASTLE OF VALLOSCURA
Once upon a time there was a poor cobbler who could find no work to do, and so, of course, very little to eat. He left his own village, and fared forth to the King's capital. Where there are more feet, there must be more shoes to mend," said he. "I'll try my luck." When
"Can
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evening came on he rapped at the door of an inn.
you give a poor man a bit of food and a night's lodging ?
he said to the hostess.
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"A bit and a sup I never yet refused to any poor man. But a bed you cannot have, not even on the floor. It is festa time, as you know, and the people are lying ten deep in the kitchen. The barn and the stable, even the cow-houses, are all full. Not one more can I take in—not one!"
She brought him out some supper, and he ate and drank gratefully, sitting by the inn door. But he could not help thinking how cruel the night winds would be to a homeless man. Just then a voice by his side said,
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And to think of that great Castle over there, with all its fine rooms so splendidly furnished, and not a soul in it-not one!"
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"What Castle?" asked the cobbler.
"Look!" And a little old man who stood there pointed across the fields and the river to where, on the lower slope of a hill, a black mass could just be descried in the gathering darkness.
"And why is it empty ?"
The little old man laughed. "He'd be a brave fellow who would enter it! It is full of evil spirits, say some. Others say of giants. Who knows? At least no man like you or me can live there. It belongs to the King; and it is full of treasures, but he can make no use of them. They say he'd give a good sum to whoever would spend a single night in it."
The cobbler-whose name by the way was Jacomo, but we'll call him Jack for short-rose up at once and went on his road to the town. Arrived there, he made some inquiries about the supply of cobblers, and then took his way to the King's Palace. The King was just

going to bed, and he received Jack very sleepily; but he woke up and stared hard at him when he heard his errand. "A night's lodging in the Castle of Valloscura! I would give you a year's lodging there if you would rid me of the evil things that swarm about it. But no one dares enter it. There were some who dared, and they never were seen any more. No! No! I cannot have another man's death on my conscience."
"Your Majesty," said Jack, "I am a poor luckless dog. If I don't try something desperate I'm like to die

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of hunger. I'm a cobbler by trade; but it seems every second man in this town is a cobbler too. Give me the key of the Valloscura Castle; and if I come badly out of this adventure, or if I don't come out of it at all, it needn't be on your conscience. This poor dog will have had his day. That's all. But I'd like to take some victuals with me; and in case I should survive a day or two, a bit of leather would not come amiss. I might weary in a great place like that, with nothing to do, and no one to speak to."
So the King ordered two strong serving-men, laden with meat and drink and all the cobbler wanted, to go with the daring man as far as the door of the Castle. The moment they reached the door they laid down their burden, and ran back to the palace as hard as ever they could.
"Now!" said Jack as he put the key in the lock, "is my luck going to turn?"
In he went. It was all dark, but he lit a lamp the - King's servants had brought with them, and he discovered great lofty halls, beautiful and spacious and silent. "This will do very well," said he. "Come what may, I'm tired out." By this time it was two o'clock in the morning. He flung himself on a couch and slept as soundly as ever he had done in his life.
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He woke when the sun streamed in at the window, rubbed his eyes, and said, "I suppose the evil spirits or the giants don't think a poor cobbler like me worth ¡ notice." Then he got up, went through the various
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rooms, admiring their beautiful ceilings, the pictures on the walls, and the silken hangings, after which he made his way to the kitchen, cooked his breakfast, and ate it in great comfort.

"A bit of work would do me no harm. It's lonesome
in this great place." So he sat down and began to cut
leather to make a pair of shoes. "I never thought to
have so fine a workshop," he said. And he worked away
diligently, and laughed to himself over the stupid cowards
who had been scared to death in so goodly a house.
Suddenly he heard, Clop-clop-clop! Something was
coming towards him. The door opened, and in came
a-Great Ram! But it was a bigger ram than he had
ever seen before, a Giant Ram! He had just got up to
shove it back with his awl, when the creature slowly,
gently, lowered its horns, and in a twinkling the cobbler
was lifted from the floor, and carried out of the kitchen
and into the open air. He was too much astonished to
stir or resist, and he knew he was defenceless against the
giant beast. So he stayed where he was, huddled up on
the Ram's back, and said to himself, "Well, now, and
what is the next chapter?" When they reached
beautiful garden the Ram dropped him softly on a lawn
and left him there.
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"Not a bad place this," said Jack. There were lovely
and fragrant flowers all round him. There was soft grass
to walk on. Marble fountains played in the sunshine and
This must be Paradise, he thought. He
birds sang.

wandered about till he spied what seemed at first sight
the loveliest flower of all. But when he drew nearer, it
was no flower-it was a lady's head! Exquisite was she,
of colour so delicate, eyes so blue, and hair all living gold !
But where was the rest of her?
She was growing
out of the earth!
....
"Oh!" he cried aloud in wonder, "who has done this
to you, my beautiful lady?”
"I'll
"Are you come to save me?" said the lady. "Or
are you like all the others, impatient and cowardly?"
"Tell me how to help you," said the cobbler.
have patience enough; and what is there to fear?"
"Know then, stranger, that I am the daughter of the
King of the Three Golden Mountains. An enemy decoyed
me away when I was riding out. My father's head-
groom tried to defend me, and the wicked one brought
us here and enchanted us both. Here am I prisoner till
one comes who knows no fear; and my faithful servant
is the Ram that brought you into the garden. To release
me is no easy thing. He must be steadfast who shall do
it. Three nights must he watch in the Castle, and witches
will come and torment him in all manner of ways. If he

is afraid, he is lost, and my hope is gone. Will you try your fate? Then courage is your only safety. Bear this also in mind. At night-time, when you go to rest, you must dress in a garment of the same colour as the hangings of the room you are lying in. And on no account must you fall asleep till the evil things are gone."

The cobbler spent the day in the beautiful garden, talking with the lady, and enjoying all the delights of the place. When evening came, the Ram returned, picked him up as before, and brought him into the kitchen. "Well," said Jack, "if I'm going to have visitors, I'd better have supper first." So he cooked his supper, and sat down to eat it comfortably. Then he heard a noise in the chimney; and in another moment there came pouring down bones and ugly heads with staring eyes, and all kinds of disagreeable things. But the cobbler did not budge. "Let 'em come! Let 'em all come!" said he. "I shan't stop eating my supper for a trifle of that kind." And when he had finished, he sang a merry song to hearten himself. The noise in the chimney ceased, and no more bones or heads rattled down.

Then the Ram came in, and bore him upstairs to a sleeping-chamber hung with yellow. He put on a yellow garment which he found ready for him, and threw himself on the bed. But he remembered the lady's command, and he did not sleep.

Midnight struck, and twelve witches scurried into the room, shrieking horribly, danced wild dances, and sang fearsome songs all out of tune, till the roof was nearly cleft with awful screaming and worse laughter. The room was filled with glaring, whirling lights; but for some time the evil creatures did not see the yellow-clad man on the yellow bed. At last he was discovered, and then, oh, the threatening, hideous faces that crowded

about him! "What are you doing here, Worm of the Earth? What do you want in our dancing-hall? Get out!" But the cobbler remained still, said not a word, and twirled his thumbs under the coverlet. They grew angrier and angrier. Never before had they met a human being who did not scream with terror at sight of them. His coolness was unbearable. Besides, it was he to win, or they. If he were not overcome by the time the clock struck one, then no more dancing for them in the Yellow Chamber of the Castle of Valloscura.

"Out with him! Down with him!" they cried.

Taking hold of the cobbler they dragged him downstairs to a deep well in the lowest vault. "In with him! In with him!" they yelled. Jack still uttered not a sound,

not even when they were giving him the final swing over the edge, which should land him in the depths below. At that moment the clock struck one. "Oh, our unlucky hour!" roared the witches, as they dropped him on the floor of the vault and fled. A minute later he heard harsh voices and a swirr in the air outside-and then silence. Where had they gone to? I do not know, unless to the Nut-tree of Benevento.

Jack picked himself up, yawned, groped his way upstairs again into the yellow room, lay down on the bed once more and slept till the sun was high in the heavens. As on the day before, he got up, cooked his breakfast, and then with a song on his lips he went to the window and looked out. This window looked towards the town, and

from it he saw a group of men at the gate, staring up at the Castle with terror in their eyes. He recognized some of them as the King's servants.

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Good-morning!" he shouted. He could hear their "Oh-h-ho!" of relief.

"It is he! He is still alive!"

"Still alive and hearty!" sang out Jack. "Won't you come in?"

"No-no, th-thank you! No, thank you! Not this morning. We only wanted to know how you had passed the night. Good-bye! Good-bye!" And off they ran, lest the gate should be opened, and they be forced inside.

The cobbler was still laughing at their fright when up came the Ram and carried him to the garden, setting him down near the wonderful flower that was the Princess. But now she was above the earth from the shoulders up. So far good. He told her the happenings of the night, and how he was not a pin the worse for all the witches' mishandling of him. And she replied, "My good friend, be just as fearless to-night, and you will free me yet." She also told him that whoever should free her might marry her, daughter of the King of the Three Golden Mountains though she was. That was fine news for a cobbler!

Again, as he was sitting at supper, Jack heard a noise in the chimney and the bones and the horrid heads with ugly faces rattled and tumbled down. "Come on!" he cried between his munches. "You can't take away my

appetite." And he shoved the things aside carelessly with his foot, laughing as if some child had thrown daisies at him. Soon the Ram came in, and led him to a new chamber hung with red. This time he donned a red garment, lay down on a red bed, but kept wide

awake.
At midnight the witches came back, four-and-twenty of them this time, dancing and screaming and playing fearsome games, and singing songs to make your hair stand on end. But their laughter was the worst of all. The cobbler paid no attention, and for a while they did not notice the red man lying on the red bed, though there were flaring lights about the room as before. But when they discovered him, their anger raged about him. "What are you doing here, Worm of the Earth? How dare you lie down in our red dancing-hall?" But the cobbler stirred not, and said never a word; he only twirled his thumbs under the coverlet. When they had threatened him and deafened him and tweaked him and pulled him, they set on him all together, hauling and dragging him down the stairs and out into the court. Some held him while the others lighted a great fire. How they laughed to think he would roast in the midst of it: "In with him! In with him!" they yelled. But just as they were about to swing him on the burning heap the clock struck one. "Our doom! Our doom!" they cried, when with a shriek they let him go, and off they went. He saw a dark mass in the air, heard a great whirring

sound, and nothing more. Where had they gone? I do not know, unless it was to the Nut-tree of Benevento. Jack picked himself up, shook the dust of the court from his garment, and groped his way back to the red chamber. There, yawning, he threw himself on the bed, and slept soundly till the sun was high in the heavens. When he rose and looked out of the window, he saw the King's servants waiting by the gate, staring up at the Castle, hardly breathing for anxiety.

Good-morning! Good-morning, friends! Won't you come in and breakfast with me?"
"It is he! It is he!" they cried to one another. "What a man! Thank you, but we have no time this morning. We only wanted to know" And off they ran back to the King to tell him of the wonderful man who seemed to thrive finely in the dark Castle of Valloscura.
Jack ate his breakfast in leisurely fashion. The Ram came in and took him into the garden, and put him down near the Princess. She had grown. From the knees upwards she was out of the ground, and her beauty was more than ever like that of some rare flower. He told her all his adventures of the night, ending up, "Well, here I am, safe and sound." But the Princess warned him: "There is still one night to pass. It will be the worst of all. Be steadfast; fear nothing; and I shall be free. Then will I return at once to my father in the Land of the Three Golden Mountains; for all this time he is

in sore anxiety about his only daughter. But in a year
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and a day I shall come back as far as the ford of the River Jordan. There I shall wait for you three days, and if you come within that time, you shall go back with me to my father. Farewell, my brave Deliverer!"
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You shall not wait in vain for me," said Jack, "though your father may say I am no match for you. And I'm not. I'm only"
But she broke in, "The King of the Three Golden Mountains honours all brave men, and none else."
In the evening the Ram took him back to his supper, which he ate to the usual accompaniment of bones and hideous heads rattling down the chimney. But the cobbler only laughed and ate, and ate and laughed, till he was ready to go to bed. This third night he was carried into a black room. He put on a black mantle and threw himself on a black bed. But he kept wide awake.
At midnight the troop of witches came in, eight-and-forty this time, and wilder and horrider than ever. Their dancing, their shrieks and yells, their shuddering laughter, and the flaring ghastly lights that lit up the scene, might have frightened any one to death; but Jack lay still under the coverlet and twirled his thumbs, as if he were listening to a nice, quiet sermon. Then their rage when they discovered him! And the sight of their ugly tangled hair, their great teeth and hanging lips, as they hung over his bed. Ugh! What are you doing here, you Worm of the Earth?" they hissed. What are you doing in our own black dancing-hall?
But he answered
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not a word, only yawned slightly in their faces. Their fury rose and rose. The black hall was their last stronghold; and if fear did not kill this tough enemy, he must be done to death in another way. "Up with him! Out with him!" they snarled and yelled. And on the instant he was set on by skinny hands and strong, bony arms. They had him out of the window. He was riding in the air with them. Then they landed him on the highest stone of the highest turret of the Castle. "Hurl him down!" was now their cry. "It is he or we to win this night. Hurl him down!"
Once more they seized hold of him. In a second he would have been dashed to the ground far, far below-but the clock struck one. "Our doom! Our doom!"

they cried and wailed as they loosed him, and he stuck fast to a pinnacle of the turret. A black mass in the air, a long harsh wail, and they had vanished out of sight and hearing, never to come back to the place of their midnight revels in the Castle of Valloscura. Where had they gone? Oh, this time I am quite sure. To the Nut-tree of Benevento, to tell all the other witches the horrible news that for three nights a mortal, a mere mortal cobbler, had withstood their worst torments, and that the Castle of Valloscura was closed to the tribe for evermore.
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They're gone," said the cobbler. "Good riddance! But this isn't the most comfortable of beds. It's narrow and it's chilly. However, morning will come if I wait long enough." He drew his black mantle round him,
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HP was set on By Skinny hands and
Strong Bony arms.

THE ITALIAN FAIRY BOOK
The priests and the acolytes dispersed, and the King's servants returned with long ladders, and the cobbler climbed down.
"Poor man! poor man!" said everybody. "What a night you have spent up there!"
"That kind of thing gives one a good appetite for break-fast," replied Jack, cheerily. He ate and he drank, and then they brought him before the King, who welcomed him with great honour.
"The bravest man in my kingdom!" Such was his greeting. "That Castle was a terror to my subjects. I might never use it, nor its parks and gardens. Name your reward. Land or gold?"
"Land or gold?" said the cobbler. "A horse would serve me better. Though I'd be all the better for a little money to put in my pockets, as I'm thinking of making a journey."
"Put your hand in my Treasury," said the King; "and take the best horse in my stable."
PART II-THE HUNDRED THOUSAND MILE
FOREST
So off went the cobbler on new adventures; and he rode and rode through the near lands and the far, and when a year and a day had gone by, he came near the place where he had arranged to meet the Princess, at the ford of the River Jordan. He put up at an inn for the night. A very
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THE ITALIAN FAIRY BOOK
gallant lord he seemed as he rode up to the door on his fine horse; and as he spent his money freely, and had

wonderful adventures to tell, the host said, "What a good husband he'd make for my eldest daughter!"
But when Jack told him of the meeting about to take place between himself and the Princess, he began to think perhaps his guest was only a simpleton after all. As if the daughter of the King of the Three Golden Mountains would be faithful to a promise she had made when she was a prisoner under enchantment! He spoke to his wife and daughters about it.
"Leave it to me," said his eldest daughter, "leave it to me, father. The Princess may be faithful, or she may not, but he'll be glad enough in three days' time to be your son-in-law." Next morning, as Jack sat at breakfast, she put a sleeping-drink into his coffee. He knew nothing about it, but drank it off, called for his horse, and rode away to meet the Princess, full of eagerness and hope.
At the Jordan ford he dismounted, tied his horse to a tree, and sat down. He felt sure she would not fail him. But, alas! as he sat waiting, he slept, slept fast and sound. Now, you must know that the Princess Althea had reached her home in the kingdom of the Three Golden Mountains the very day she had been delivered from the enchantment. But that was because she had a godmother with one fairy gift. The gift was a coach that could travel fast, fast, a hundred miles a minute, through

lakes or marshes or over mountain-tops. But only one journey might it make every year. The godmother and the coach were waiting for Althea when she came out of the enchanted garden, and the journey they made back to that far-distant land seemed like stepping across the road. She would fain have waited for her Deliverer; but her godmother hurried her back to her father without an instant's delay. But in a year and a day once more the coach was available; and now the Princess had travelled in it to the ford of Jordan, to meet her Deliverer, and take him to her father the King. Three days would the coach wait, and no more.
"Ah, he has come! he has come!" she cried, as she hurried down to the river-bank and saw the cobbler sitting there. She wondered he did not rise to meet her, and then she discovered he was fast asleep, so fast she could not wake him. Long hours she sat by him, and still he slept. When night was coming on, she had to go back to her waiting godmother. "Poor man!" she said,

someone has played a cruel trick on you. When you wake, you will know I have been here." So saying, she threw a handkerchief, with her picture on it, on the grass beside him, and went away. But a shepherd lad had seen her drop the kerchief, and when she had gone he

made his way to the sleeping man, and picked it up. "Here's a pretty thing!" he said. "If you don't want it, I do."
At last the cobbler awoke. The light had almost

faded from the sky. He started up in dismay. Alas! if the Princess had come he had not known it. He had failed her. He could only hope she had been delayed, and would come to-morrow. Sorrowfully he went back to his inn, and, like the simple fellow he was, he told what had happened.
"Never mind," said the innkeeper's daughter to him, "there are still two days. She is sure to come." But next morning she again put a sleeping-drink in his coffee, and the same thing happened once more. As soon as he had sat down by the ford he fell fast asleep. In due time came the Princess, tried to wake him, but in vain. "Poor man!" she said, some one has played this trick on you." She stayed for hours beside him, then she went back to her godmother. But first she slipped a ring on the sleeping man's finger. And again, the little shepherd crept up, and stole the ring.

"Once more I have failed her!" said the cobbler when he woke. "What has come over me?" And he went back to the inn, sorrowful and ashamed, and told them how he had slept away his happiness. Then the innkeeper's daughter comforted him, saying, "There is still a day, and still a chance. To-morrow you must keep awake."
But next morning she again put a sleeping-drink in his coffee; and once more he fell fast asleep by the ford. And this time he slept sounder than ever. The Princess called in his ear, pleaded with him, but all in vain. "Poor

man! Someone has played an ill trick on you. You are under a spell. And, alas! now I must leave you. The coach waits no longer!" Then she cut off a lock of her golden hair, and left it lying by him. The little shepherd was near by. She called to him, and he came. "When this man wakes up," she said, "tell him I have come three times, and now must go. He must find his way to me by himself. But I shall wait seven years for him at my father's court."
Evening came. The cobbler woke, started up, and cried "Alas, alas! I have slept my happiness away, and this time for ever! What is the use of life to me after losing such a chance?" He would have thrown himself into the river in despair; but the herd-boy came up behind, and held him back. Then he gave the cobbler

the three tokens, the kerchief, the ring, and the lock of hair, also the Princess's message.
"But how shall I follow her, and where?" cried Jack.
"If I were you, I'd ask the Wise Man of Monteverde. Nobody can direct you if he will not." And he pointed to a little hut on a hill near by.
So, without returning to the inn, the cobbler mounted his horse, and rode up the steep path to the little hermitage where dwelt the Wise Man.
"What do you want, my son?" asked the Wise Man.
"I want to know the shortest road to the kingdom of the Three Golden Mountains."
"There is no short way, my son. Every road is long

and difficult and dangerous; and few men there be that have ever reached the end of it alive."
"Could I get there in seven years?"

"Not in seven times seven years by the only roads left open."
"Yet a lady came here the other day from that king-dom."
"Ah, now I know who you are. You are the man who

slept away his happiness. How should such a man ever make such a journey?"
"Then how did the lady come?"
"In the Coach of Swiftness, whose wheels never touch the ground. Lakes, marshes, and mountains it goes over as easily as the high road."
"And will it come this way again?"
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Nay, that it will not. It stopped one instant before my door. Two women were in it, one old, one young. 'Let us wait for him!' pleaded the young lady. 'The coach never waits for a sleepy sluggard,' answered the other. 'Then let it come back for him!' she cried. 'The coach never returns for him who sleeps away his happiness,' said the old woman."
"Well, I'm awake now," said the cobbler, briskly. "And if there is a way of reaching the Kingdom of the Three Golden Mountains in seven years' time, tell me, and I shall start off without a moment's delay."
"There is a way for a brave and patient man; but all who have tried it till now have turned back, or died in the midst of their task. Cross the ford of Jordan River. On the other side you will come to the edge of a forest. Cross that forest. The other end of it is in the country where you desire to be. Farewell, my son, and good

fortune go with you!"
"Seven years to cross a forest!" said Jack to himself as he rode down to the ford. "Ridiculous!"
Sure enough on the other side of the river was a line

of trees stretching so far that he saw no end to it. The cobbler rode up to the edge, and thought of himself riding pleasantly on by the wood-paths under a cool, green shade. But it was impossible to enter on horseback, for the trees and the undergrowth were so thick that a rabbit could not have struggled through, let alone a horse. And there were no paths. Jack turned back on his way, and saw a man sitting by the river, looking weary and sad. Lying by his side were wood knives and gleaming hatchets.
"Will you sell me a hatchet, friend?"
"What do you want with a hatchet?"
"I'm going to cut my way through that forest."
The man laughed, and said: "Then I am not the only fool in the world. Know that I have spent three years cutting down the trees and the underwood, and they grew up again as fast as I cut them. I broke hundreds of hatchets, and spent all my little fortune. Now I am going back to my home, poor and defeated."
"If you spent three years, I'll spend seven, if need be. And at least you can ride home. Here's a fine horse out of a King's stable. Now give me your knives and hatchets."
The man thought he had to deal with a fool. He gave up the knives and hatchets willingly enough, and rode away on the horse, thinking he had the best of the bargain.
"Now to work!" said Jack. He began to hew and cut with all his strength, and trunks and branches and bushes fell around him. But in their place others sprang

up, thicker and closer and more tangled than the last; and he would have been stifled, had he not cut with all his might and sprung back again to the edge. But he would not give up. He lived on nuts and berries, on anything he could find. Now he tried one part of the wood, now another; but it was always the same. When people passed that way he shouted to them, and asked them to help. They shook their heads, and called him a madman. One of them told him the forest had not always been there. But when the Princess of the kingdom of the Three Golden Mountains had been decoyed away from her home, her enemy, the magician, had caused this forest to spring up, to bar her way back to her own country.
At last even the valiant Jack was all but in despair.
"I'm only a poor cobbler. A cobbler should stick to his

last." And yet and yet-the Princess was waiting for him. "Cross that forest," the Wise Man had said. Had he been laughing at him? Still Jack wandered and wandered along the edge of the forest, trying his axe and knife every day at fresh points. And he might be doing the same now, for he could not bear to give in, had not he run a new risk one day.

He was just going to attack a great tree with his hatchet, when he heard a growl. Looking round he saw a very huge and very fierce lion quite near him. Now, the cobbler was valiant, but he saw no reason for being imprudent, and instead of aiming again at the trunk, quick as

lightning he climbed up the tree, far out of reach of the cruel beast. But the lion waited below, and as Jack had to stay above, he made use of his eyes, and looked out over the top of the forest. It stretched away and away, and he could not see the end of it. He had set himself a hopeless task. Yet the Wise Man had said : Cross the forest." Had he been laughing at him? Then an idea flashed on him. "He must have meant on the top of the trees. Well, he laughs best who laughs last. It's good to have a change of work sometimes."

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So he began to creep along the tops of the trees. If you think that an easy task, just you try to do it yourself. He had to swing like a monkey, or a squirrel, he had to climb up and down, and pick his way. But at least his head was mostly in the air; and slow as was his progress, he left the edge of the forest farther and farther behind him. He had no idea how much time had passed, but his journey seemed very long; he was often weary, and the forest seemed never to end.

End it did, however, one day. There came a wonderful minute when he scrambled down from the very last tree ! He saw before him a wide, bright, glistening plain, and across the plain there gleamed in the sun-the Three Golden Mountains. If he had known what he looked like, he might not have been in such a hurry to go to the King's court. But he had brought no mirror with him, and did not guess how wild and black his face looked. Of course, he was aware his hair was matted, that his beard grew

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down to his knees, and that his clothes were all in rags. But he could not wait for shaving or mending. After all," he said, "I'm only the cobbler." And, besides, on his way across the plain he came up with hurrying folks, who told him they were going to the wedding of the Princess Althea.

PART III. THE WILD MAN COMES TO COURT

Was the Princess faithless, then? No, not at all. But when the seven years had nearly gone by, her father said to her: "You must wait no longer for your Deliverer. He is dead, like so many that have sought our land, or he has forgotten you. I have chosen a husband for you, a King's son. You and he shall reign after I am gone." The Princess wept and pleaded, "I am betrothed to the bravest man in all the world." But her father was firm and stern; the wedding-feast was ordered; the eve of the wedding-day came, and with it Prince Vanerello, the bridegroom.

In the cool of the evening the King, his daughter, and the Prince were walking on the Castle terrace, when suddenly there appeared before them a creature all tattered and torn, with matted hair covering his head and all his face save two gleaming eyes. A thick tangled beard reached down to his feet. He was rushing towards the Princess furiously with his arms open, and uttering sounds none of them could understand.

"Seize him! seize the Wild Man!" cried the King to the Prince.

Now, the Prince was trembling with fright; but it behoved him to show some spirit before the lady he was going to marry; so with a shaking hand he drew his sword, saying, "Be off! Be off with you!" But the wild man threw him aside as if he had been a leaf, and cast himself before the Princess, crying in a low voice,

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Althea! Althea! Could you not wait ?

"Who is it? Who is it?" she murmured.

But the King, terrified for his daughter, once more called to the Prince to play the man. Seeing Vanerello, however, pale and trembling, he rushed on the creature himself and struggled with him, while the Prince ran away and called the servants. A great band of them came running and shouting. "Selvanel! It is Selvanel!" (Now, Selvanel is the Wild Man of the Woods, and very terrible to meet.) Some made off at once; but others were bold and rescued the King from what they thought his great danger; then they bound the monster and bore him away and locked him in the royal stable.

When he had gone, the Princess turned to her father and said: "And that coward Vanerello is the man I must marry!"

"I have given my word," answered the King; but he sighed heavily.

An hour later the King's servants ventured to peep in at the stable door. The monster was neither raving nor

roaring, but sitting quietly by the horses as tame and gentle as anyone could wish. That made them bolder. "Wild Man! Wild Man!" they cried. "We've caught you at last. And the gallows is rising for you." But he only said, "Cut the cords." And one more daring than the rest did so.
Then he said, "I'm hungry." And one threw him a piece of raw meat, and one a handful of corn, saying, "Here, Wild Man! Here, beast!"
But he answered, "I'm not a Wild Man, and I'm not a beast. I'm the cobbler, and I come here on the invitation of the Princess Althea. She gave it me seven years ago."
How they laughed! Then they ran to the King and said: "Please your Majesty, the Wild Man says he's the Princess's cobbler, and here by her orders, which she gave seven years ago. And he won't eat raw meat, and he won't eat corn; yet he says he's hungry."
"Take food to the creature," said the King. "But guard him well!"
So the King's servants took food to the stable. They thought it would be amusing to watch a wild cobbler eat. When they offered him the food, however, he said, "I'm still hungry, but I won't eat here. I will eat at the King's table. Bring me water and all that is necessary for my toilette after my journey; and send the King's Barber to me. And tell the Master of the Robes my clothes are not so good as they might be after struggling through the

forest. I would appear becomingly before their High-nesses."
The King's servants were more astonished than ever. A shaggy, hairy, tattered creature to talk like that! So they ran to tell the King.
"Please your Majesty, the Wild Cobbler will only eat at your table. And he wants water to wash with, and orders your Barber and your Master of the Robes to come and shave and dress him, so that he may be fit for your Majesty's eyes to look on when he comes to dinner."
The King laughed heartily. And the Prince, who was trying to brave things out, for he knew he had behaved in a poor-spirited way, laughed heartily too, and said, "A droll fellow! I knew all along he was not dangerous. Your Majesty's servants were a little hasty."
"A droll fellow, indeed!" said the King. "And as we are all out of spirits to-day, perhaps it will cheer us if we see something of our strange guest." To the servants he said, "Let a chamber be prepared for him; and send my Barber and my Master of the Robes, and let him be fittingly clothed. When he is ready, bring him to my parlour. I

shall see him first before he dines with us."
"Dine with us!" cried Vanerello. "Come! Come!
Since when have low-born men dined at princes' tables?"
"Since princes turned cowards!" retorted Althea,
who had been listening to the conversation. And at the
word Vanerello retired, very sulky indeed.
"Who is this wild cobbler, my daughter, who comes

on a seven-year-old invitation ? Is it some man you
knew in your exile?"
"No man did I know in my exile save my Deliverer.
And he is dead, or he would have come to me; for he was
the bravest man in all the world."
Meanwhile the cobbler had been taken to a splendid
chamber. He bathed; and the Chief Barber came and
shaved him, and cut his tangled hair. And the Master of
the Robes brought him a heap of gorgeous clothes belong-
ing to the King. He chose a splendid suit of yellow and
red and black, in memory of the nights he spent with the
witches in the rooms of these colours in the Castle of
Valloscura. Then, well-guarded, of course, he was ushered
into the royal parlour.
The King stared in astonishment at the change in his
appearance. "Who are you?" he asked.
"Please your Majesty, I'm the cobbler. I've been a
long time coming, but the Forest of Cento-mille-miglia is
very long and thick and rough. However, here I am at
last."
"You crossed the Forest of Cento-mille-miglia! You!
Then you're the first who has ever done the like. Never
since the Princess Althea returned to us in her godmother's
Wonder-coach have we seen any one from the world
beyond Jordan. You are a traveller indeed! And a
very brave man!"
"You see I had an appointment. First at the ford.
But some evil charm was on me, and I fell asleep.
'I'll

wait for him seven years at my father's court '-that was
the message the Princess left with the herd-boy when she
could not wake me, and had to go away by herself. Of
course I hurried as much as I could; but it appears I have
only come in the nick of time."
The King looked him in the face.
Cobbler or no cobbler,
here was a brave, strong, handsome man, just such as he
would have desired for a son-in-law. But maybe he was
an impostor.
At that moment the great bell rang for dinner. The
King rose and bade his guest follow him into the dining-

hall. When the cobbler appeared on the threshold, Althea looked at him with wonder and hope in her face. But he had no doubt on his, and no fear, as he ran to her and knelt on the ground before her. The Prince rushed forward, and drew his sword, this time right valiantly. He was feeling very brave, for the stranger did not look fierce, and wore no arms. "Villain!" he cried, as he drew the blade from its scabbard, "you presume too much!"
But the Princess stayed him with her hand, and raised the kneeling man.
"Madam!" cried Vanerello, "you make a mistake. If I am not deceived, that is the Wild Man, who calls himself a cobbler."
"Cobbler or no cobbler, this is my Deliverer! To him I gave my word. He it was who strove with evil spirits three nights in the Castle of Valloscura, and freed me from my captivity. I bade him meet me at Jordan ford, and

he came. But some enemy cast a spell on him, and he slept. Three times I came. Three times he slept. My godmother would wait no longer in her Wonder-coach. I gave him tryst here, and said, 'Seven years will I wait.' "
"He says he crossed the Hundred-thousand-mile Forest," broke in the King. "It is the greatest feat of my reign! But take care, my daughter. There are impostors in the world."
"Do not I know my Deliverer?" she asked. "Yet I will prove him. When I left him asleep by Jordan River, I laid three tokens by his side."
"What were these tokens?" asked the King.
"My kerchief with my picture on it, my ring, and a lock of my golden hair."
"I lost much on the way," said the cobbler, "but I did not lose those." So saying, he drew out of his pocket the kerchief, the ring, and the lock of golden hair. "Here they are"; and he kissed them.
"And what do you ask in return for these treasures?" said the King.
"The hand of your daughter, Majesty."
"My daughter is already betrothed to the Prince here."
"The Prince is no longer here," said Althea. And, indeed, Vanerello had slipped away at the sight of the tokens. He called for his horse, and rode back at once to the land he had come from.
"But why did you call yourself the cobbler?" asked the King.

"Cobbler I am a cobbler out of work-a cobbler in luck!"
"Prince from this moment; and from to-morrow my

son-in-law and heir to the Kingdom of the Three Golden Mountains."
and the
They feasted, they
The Young
But you and me they
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left
OUT in s Cold
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From the Riviera
THE SWORD OF MIGHT
For a long time everything had gone wrong with King Massimo. When he went to war he was defeated. Neighbouring kings invaded his lands; and in spite of his well-known bravery, they got the better of him in every encounter. He could not even count upon his army. His soldiers called out for a new leader, and said his time for ruling was over and past, Yet he felt he had many good years before him, if only he could recover his honour and the trust of his people. Both had gone the day he lost the Sword of Might.
The loss had taken place years ago. On his way to make a treaty with some brother princes, he was riding through a wood, when, in a glade, he saw seven lovely ladies dancing in a ring. Kings' daughters did they seem, so graceful were they, so exquisitely clad. He thought he could spare just one moment to watch them. So he stayed his horse, and the minutes passed swiftly, till, suddenly, he found himself in the midst of them. They were dancing round him; they were dancing with him; and when he said, "I must be gone," they sang sweetly in his ear, till he forgot all about his meeting with his brother princes, till he forgot everything in the
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world save the dance and the song, and sank down on the sod, where the ladies half-covered him with garlands. A deep sleep then came on him. When he awoke the lovely ladies were gone. He heard only the thud of galloping horses. The remembrance of his business came back to him, and he started up, and mounted, and rode off. But night had fallen; the woods were infested by robbers; and he felt for his sword. It was gone! He returned to the glade. It was not there. Ah! who were those lovely ladies who danced and sang around him, and stole his Sword of Might? When he reached the Castle where the princes were to meet, he found they had dispersed, and that the treaty had been settled against his interests. That was but the first of many misfortunes.
He sent messengers out in every direction to seek the Sword, the great heirloom of his house, handed down

from father to son. He offered great rewards for its recovery. All was of no avail.
"Ask the wise Sibilla," said some of his friends. "Call her back to the Court and she will direct you how to find it."
"She is but a foolish woman," he answered. "She babbles."
In truth, he had gone secretly to her, in her hut on the edge of the forest, to which she had retired when he banished her from the palace, where she had been nurse to his little son. He had offered her money and favour if she would help him in this matter.

"How should a babbler help?" was all her answer.
Now, the reason of her banishment was this. On a certain day he had been walking with his First Minister, and bemoaning the loss of the Sword. He was just going to explain how he had been set upon by brigands and robbed, when Sibilla passed by with his little son. As if to the child, but edging near the King the while, she began to croon:
"Unhappy day when down he laid
His Sword of Might in the green glade!
And evil, evil was the chance
That led him to the witches' dance!"
Now, Massimo had never told anyone how the Sword had vanished, and would not have it known. So he turned on Sibilla wrathfully, and pushed her aside. When she began to sing again, he whispered, "A word more, and you die!" That day she was dismissed from his service, and sent away to live by herself, nor was anyone allowed to have any communication with her.
And things went still worse with the King, for she was a wise woman, and had oftentimes given him good counsel.
As for Gaudenzio, the King's son, things might go ill or well, he only thought of chasing butterflies or playing ball, or teasing his tutors and governors. But one day, when he had grown to be a lad of fifteen or so, he was in the royal forest. A bird sang above his head. He tried to catch it, to bring it home and put it in a cage.

But the bird refused to be caught, and he took his bow, aimed, and his arrow grazed its wing. He expected the bird to fall-but it had disappeared, and on the path before him stood an ugly old woman shaking her stick at him. He laughed aloud at her anger; and she said, Laugh while you may, young Prince. You'll laugh no more till you have brought home your father's Sword

of Might."
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The Prince ran home and told his father, and asked,
What is this Sword of Might about which every one
makes such a fuss ?
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King Massimo said he was too young to understand,
and bade him go and play. But from that moment
Gaudenzio was smitten with the sadness that hung over
the palace. He neither laughed nor smiled, and no
amusements which his father provided gave him any
pleasure. "My father treats me like a child," he said.
"I will go seek the Sword myself." So he took a horse
from the stable, saddled it, and set off, leaving a brief
message for the King.
The one friend he wished to take leave of was Sibilla,
his old nurse. For some time after her banishment, he
had not been allowed to see her; but he had fretted so
much that his father had given way. A message had
however reached her, "If you speak to the Prince of
what you whispered in the King's ear, you shall die."
Gaudenzio found her at her cottage door, on the edge of
a forest.
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THE ITALIAN FAIRY BOOK
"Ah, my Prince," she said, " here you are, and I have
baked no cake for you to-day!"
"I don't want a cake. I'm not a child any longer.
I'm off to seek the Sword of Might."
"Oh, you have grown up, have you ? And you are
going out into the world all by yourself? You're a
spirited lad! I wish I could go with you: but you'd
find an old woman like me in the way. Yet I have some-
thing here may help you on your journey-this little jar
of oil. Never part with it for a moment till the oil is all
spent. See, let me sling it over your shoulder. Sprinkle
some oil along your outward road, and you'll know the
way back. And whenever you are in doubt, touch the
jar and sprinkle oil. Remember also this counsel. If
you would bring back your father's Sword, seek that and
that only. Seven are the dangers, seven the enticements,
one is the quest! I may tell you no more." Then with
her blessing she sped him on his way.
Gaudenzio went by forest and marsh and plain and hill
-on, on, just as his horse led him. There was nothing
else to do. Whenever he asked after the Sword, he was
always told, "We know nothing of it. It is not in our
country." All the way along he sprinkled oil from his
jar, and little green bushes sprang up. He rode many
days, and many days more, till he was high up on the
side of a mountain, and spied in the distance a Castle,
dark and eerie-looking, with seven black towers. "What

Castle is that?" he asked of the few people he met. They
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all told him to avoid it. It was the Castle of the Seven
Witches; and the witches never slept, for they watched
stolen treasure night and day.
66
"Perhaps they watch my father's Sword," said Gaud-
enzio to himself. On he went, and he came to a green
meadow near the Castle walls, and in it were seven horses
grazing. By this time his own horse was nearly dead
with fatigue.
One of these would do finely for me!"
said the Prince. And he called to them as he was wont
to call his father's horses at home. They came running
at his call; but touching Sibilla's jar at that moment,
he remembered her saying, "Seven are the dangers,
seven the enticements, one is the quest." Then he
reflected, "After all, I'm not here to steal horses but
to find my father's Sword." He was moving on; but
the seven steeds were round him. Very beautiful they
were; he had never seen their like. But they were
making his own horse frenzied. The poor beast was
foaming at the mouth; and they blocked the way. Gaud-
enzio sprinkled some oil among them, and they ran off,
scampering madly. There was a wild terror in their
neighing. When he looked round again they had
vanished.
66
One of these would have carried me farther than I
want to go," said the Prince.
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At the outer gate of the Castle, which stood open, he
tied his horse up, sprinkling some oil round it, and went
in. But seven lions guarded the path to the door. They
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growled fiercely at his approach. "I didn't count on
this," he said. He was turning to flee when the jar jerked
against his side, and he remembered, "Seven are the
dangers." Why should lions be here? To guard some-
thing, of course. So though his hand shook and his heart
was down in his boots, he sprinkled the oil as he went on.
One fierce yellow eye after another closed drowsily. The
beasts were asleep as he ran by them. When he looked
back they were gone.
But on the steps quite another sight met his gaze.
Seven lovely maidens sat there weaving garlands and
singing. They rose with the friendliest faces, and said.
"You have come at last, our deliverer. We have waited
a weary time for you. But you are tired after your
journey. Sit down among us and rest ere you go inside

to the great encounter." They were all round him, smiling and twining garlands about his neck. He would fain have stayed, for never in his life had he seen such pretty playmates. But when one of them tried to unsling the oil-jar from his shoulder, he remembered, "Seven are the enticements, one is the quest."
"I'm not your deliverer I didn't come to see you at all. And I'm in a great hurry. I'm seeking my father's Sword." He cast off the garlands; he unclasped the hands about his neck. The ladies were not easy to get rid of, for he did not wish to be rough; but in his struggle some drops of oil jerked out of the jar and fell about them. The lovely creatures fell back-snarling! One glance

he had, before he opened the great door of the Castle, of seven hideous hags with grey tangled hair and grey faces!
Shutting the door behind him, he ran along the hall, bounded up the wide staircase, and went into a great hall, quite dark save for one light in the centre. The light came from no lamp, but from the golden jewelled scabbard of a great sword lying on a cushion. He knew it at once for the Sword of Might, though he had been only a little child when it was lost. He lifted the great weapon, drew it, not easily, from the scabbard, and the blade gave out a light that flashed about the hall. Outside he heard cries of anger or terror.
"How can I get away from here, with those horrid creatures behind the door?" he thought. "Perhaps I can hack my way through them." Cautiously he opened the door. No witches, but seven warriors, fully armed, were on him! His own little sword snapped at the mere contact with their armour; and the Sword of Might was so heavy he could not use it with skill. But the flash of the great weapon blinded them for a moment, so that he could just struggle through them to the gate, and drop the oil that sent them howling back. Hardly had he mounted his terrified horse when the enemy was on him again-but not in the shape of warriors. Seven fierce hounds yapped at him, and attacked his horse's legs; and it was rather a wild dance than a ride the Prince and the poor beast performed till he could make use of his

sovereign remedy. But his oil was nearly spent; and the dogs were still about him, ready to tear horse and man limb from limb. With all his might he hurled the jar at them. It broke in pieces. They sniffed it and fled howling. After he reached the first of the bushes that had sprung up along his path, there were no more attacks, but the road was long and weary. He had only to look at the

Sword, however, to regain strength and cheerfulness; and when in the darkness he unsheathed it, all was like day about him. At Sibilla's cottage he lighted down, but only to tell her his tale; and when he went back to the town, it was Sibilla that rode. He, with the great Sword he could hardly drag, led the horse by the bridle. The whole town rang with joy at his approach. King Massimo held up his head once more; for he had got back the Sword of Might, and his only son had proved himself to be a lad of worth. Sibilla, reconciled to him, lived at his Court; and all went well with King Massimo and his country. All went better still when Gaudenzio his son reigned in his stead.

The stories are told. Let's shut the door.
But they come from where there are plenty more.
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THE SOURCES OF THE TALES

I HAVE not compiled a volume of folk-lore, but made a selection of Italian folk and fairy tales for English children. It is, I think, fairly representative, but the entertainment of my readers has been my chief thought. Grown-up persons who may be curious about the general subject, can obtain an accurate idea of the main elements and themes of Italian folk-lore from Mr. T. W. Crane's excellent book.

No folk-lore collectors in Europe surpass, even if they equal, those of Italy in industry and intelligence; and German scholars have also made the field their own with their usual thoroughness. Without giving an exhaustive list, I may mention the publications of Comparetti, De Gubernatis, De Nino, Finamore, Gonzenbach, Kunst and Wolf, Schneller, and the great master of them all, the Sicilian, Dr. Pitré. The Archivio delle Tradizioni Popolari, edited by Pitré, is a magnificent store-house of tales and every description of folk-lore. To the labours of these scholars I acknowledge fully my indebtedness, for I have read widely in making a small selection. But my method was bound to be adaptation rather than

translation. These folk-lore collections are for the most part strictly scientific; the tales, being taken down literally from the mouths of peasants, are often incomplete, elliptical, incoherent. In many cases they were addressed to an audience who met the tale-teller half-way. Precious documents, of course; but children are with the poets and artists in being indifferent to documents; and so I have often had to gather from different sources the links that made a story complete, or to strengthen one version from another. In every case I have told the story in my own words; but there are no modern, and no foreign interpolations.

The literary sources are mainly three. Nos. 1, 22, and 23, are from Straparola's Piacevoli Notti, adapted, I need not say. Straparola's collection, largely recruited from genuine folk-tales, hardly merits the general taboo which has kept it away from English readers. If a more popular edition than the scholarly one of Mr. Waters should be undertaken, there need be no question of disrespect in suppressing the silly innuendoes and the corrupt interpolations by which he spoilt some honest old tales, when he presented them afresh to a grown-up and not very fastidious sixteenth-century audience.

I have included eight tales from the Pentamerone of Basile. Six of these, Nos, 2, 6, 8, 9, 12, 13, are somewhat condensed from Miss Zimmern's edition of Taylor's translation, published by Mr. Unwin in The Children's Library. My abbreviations have been in the direction

of doing away with the last vestiges of Basile's quite intolerable mannerisms and moralisings. There is no respectable child but would revolt from these. His egregious style can only have interest for students of the by-ways of Italian minor literature, as Lyly's has for students of the aberrations of Elizabethan English. But Basile was an excellent story-teller when he forgot to be "ingenious"; and his stuff, stripped of its foolish ornament, reveals the good old folk-tales. I have given his version of the wide-spread Puss in Boots story-Gagliuso. It is as good as any other. But I leave aside the vexed question whether Italy was its earliest home.

The other two stories from the Pentamerone, Nos. 7 and 14, I have adapted from the original.

No. 11, St. Anthony, has come from Italy by a round-about route. Undoubtedly it was founded on Italian chivalresque material, but as it stands here it will be easily recognised as an abbreviated version of a chapter from our own Richard Johnson's Seven Champions of Christendom.

The general verdict is against all modern fairy tales, save Andersen's and even Andersen nods now and then. But another exception should be made in favour of the eminent Italian writer, Luigi Capuana. From his C'era una Volta (Once upon a Time, published in The Children's Library) I have taken Nos. 10, 15 and 21, confident that they are of the true breed. Tours de force they may be, but wonderfully successful. Signor Capuana had satu-

rated himself with the fairy tales of his country before Ti-tiriti-ti could have been born.

There is a wealth of delightful fairy-lore in Boiardo and Ariosto. Tales from them have been compiled for

English readers more than once. Leigh Hunt's collection is the best, but not one of them is very satisfactory. You cannot adapt and paraphrase and cut down an exquisite artist like Ariosto with impunity. To give him in entirety to children is like inviting them to enjoy themselves in some vast, many-chambered, splendidly furnished and decorated palace, which is too good to play in, and where brilliant jeux d'artifice and bewildering stage scenes are going on all the time, striking them dumb with wonder, and somewhat tiring their eyes. But take the splendour away, and Ariosto has gone too. Form and content with such an artist are one. Tales from Shakespeare may be possible, perhaps because Shakespeare was a dramatist. Tales from Ariosto are impossible, perhaps because Ariosto was none. With him it is a case of Take all, or leave all.

Many of the stories are not exclusively Italian, but can be paralleled in Perrault and Grimm and Campbell; but I have included few that are as widely known as Beauty and the Beast, for instance, of which there are innumerable versions. It may be thought that tales from places so widely different as the Wälsch-Tirol, the Maremma, highly-cultivated Tuscany and sunny Sicily, should have widely different characteristics. If these exist, they are

very subtle. I might hazard the assertion that stories of wild men and bogeys are more common in the mountainous Tyrol, indicating a German origin, and that where the King of Spain is mentioned, the tale belongs to the old Kingdom of Naples. But such assertions are worth little, and probably erroneous. Folk-tales, as distinguished from local legends, have no climate, or landscape, or colour of their own. The sea and the mountains in them are not the Adriatic or the Mediterranean, the Alps or the Apennines, even when they are called so, but the seas and mountains of that fairyland which is everywhere and nowhere, which contains every latitude, and which has no frontiers. Nos. 19 and 25 are Tyrolese, but not exclusively. Nos. 5 and 24 are from the Abruzzi, with near relations elsewhere. Nos. 3 and 20 are Tuscan, but other provinces claim them. Nos. 16, 17 and 18 are Sicilian, but you will find their cousins settled on the mainland. No. 26, The Sword of Might, comes from the Italian Riviera; but I hazard a guess that some Celt from the North had a hand in it. As for the universal favourite, Lionbruno, you might as well ask if Jack the Giant-Killer be Kentish or North-umbrian. Scores of versions have been told at rustic firesides, and in prose and verse the hero's adventures have been circulated in countless Chap-books. The fanciful might trace back some of the incidents to the myths of Æolus and of Hermes. Mixture of braggart

and rogue and practical joker, of fortune's favourite
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THE ITALIAN FAIRY BOOK
and good fellow, Lionbruno has the real stamp of the
popular hero upon him. One of his adventures may
remind you of the old English (and French) Sir Launfal;
but he is true Italian, nevertheless.
A. M.

Printed in Great Britain by Wyman & Sons Ltd., London, Reading and
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all day and all
was
"I would take me
night to tell you hare lovely she
and, even then, I shouldn't it Piave have funistick" f
"She has eaten bread bakal m
than
one over!"
"You and I are ontaide, but at
least we can puup in the windows
couch, we something of it all".
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Even a tiny bit of wood will
heave it to me. You are mot
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